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THE SECRET OF JOHN MILTON

BY

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Thy soul was like a Star,
and dwelt apart
(Wordsworth)

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I.

INTRODUCTION

Lovers of Milton have at all times instinctively felt that the poet must have been exceptionally susceptible to the phenomena of illumination. Thomas Gray (1716—71) in his *Pindaric Ode* entitled *The Progress of Poesy*, which abounds in reminiscences of Milton's diction, describes the wanderings of the Muses from Greece to Rome and thence into England. He praises Shakespeare as the foremost poet of the English nation; but Milton is not inferior to him:

Nor second He, that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of Ecstasy
The secrets of the Abyss to spy:
He passed the flaming bounds of Place and Time:
The living Throne, the sapphire-blaze
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night. (ll. 95 ff.)

William Thompson (1712—66), a poet now almost completely forgotten, writes in a similar strain:

In Milton's Alcove.

Here, mighty Milton! in the blaze of noon,
Amid the broad effulgence, here I fix
Thy radiant tabernacle. Nought is dark
In thee, thou bright companion of the sun!
Thus thy own Uriel in the centre stands
Illustrious, waving glory round him! he
Fairest archangel of all spirits in heaven,
As of the sons of men the greatest thou.

(from *Garden Inscriptions*, Anderson's
British Poets, London 1795, vol. 10, p. 993)

The critics, on the whole, have failed to draw attention to this important feature of Milton's poetry. Verity, however, remarks, that "it has been well said that there is something peculiarly personal and sensitive in Milton's references to light" (edition of *Paradise Lost*, Cambridge University Press, p. 429, note on III. 1—2); and it is greatly to the credit of Mr. John Bailey's faculty of appreciation to have discovered the same peculiarity in the poet. In his volume on *Milton* contributed to the Home University Library, Mr. Bailey writes: "And, if power be one of the most frequent elements in the Miltonic thought, what is more frequent than light in the Miltonic vision? And is not that substitution of «did fill the new-made world with light» for the bare scientific statement of the original, a foretaste of the Milton who, all his life, blind or seeing, felt the joy and wonder of light, as no other man ever did? Do we not rightly hear in it a note that will soon be enriched into the «Light unsufferable» of the *Ode*, the «endless morn of light» of the *Solemn Music*, the «bosom bright of blazing Majesty and Light» of the *Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester*, and, not to multiply quotations, of the «Hail, holy Light» which opens the great invocation of the third book of *Paradise Lost*?"

II.

THE WEAKNESS OF MILTON'S EYES

The general implication contained in the above quotations seems to be that Milton was a great lover of light. This belief, however, requires correction. A closer and more systematic investigation will reveal the strange fact that, although he pays much attention to all the various phenomena of illumination, he also exhibits a quite exceptional, and almost morbid, love of darkness. At least in the poems composed before his blindness: see, e. g., his *Penseroso*, *Comus*, books I, II, IV, and IX of *Paradise Lost*, the action of which is steeped in darkness or twilight. We know on the poet's own authority that his sight was defective from the very beginning. In his *Defensio Secunda* he tells us that his eyes were "naturally weak". In his *Seventh Elegy* he wrote:

At mihi adhuc refugam quaerebant lumina noctem,
Nec matutinum sustinere jubar. (ll. 15—6)

My eyes, too tender for the blaze of light,
Still sought the shelter of retiring night.

(Cowper's translation)

Warton very significantly remarks on this passage: "Here is the elegance of poetic expression; but he really complains of the weakness of his eyes, which began early" (Thomas Warton's edition of *Poems by John Milton*, 1785, p. 480). Thyer, an early commentator who is quoted by Newton in his edition of *Paradise Lost* (1750), provides the following remark on book IV. 598—9: "Milton is very singular in the frequent and particular notice which he takes of the twilight, whenever he has occasion to speak of the evening. I do not remember to have met with the same in any other poet; and yet there is, to be sure, something so agreeable in that soft and gentle light, and such a peculiar fragrance attends it in the summer months, that it is a circumstance which adds great beauty to his description. I have often thought that the weakness of the poet's eyes, to which this kind of light must be vastly pleasant, might be the reason that he so often introduces the mention of it." The lines on which Thyer wrote this commentary run as follows:

Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad.

More recently, V. P. Squires, an American scholar, applying the methods of modern philological research to an investigation of *Milton's Treatment of Nature*, arrives at the conclusion that there must have been something the matter with the poet's eyesight, and that he probably suffered from near-sightedness. Squires further conjectures that the condition of Milton's eyes must be held responsible for many peculiarities in his descriptions of natural objects and scenery. (See *Modern Language Notes*, IX. pp. 454 ff.)

Strange as it may appear, Addison and Pope had long before Thompson and Gray recognized the true nature of Milton's treatment of landscape and scenery, as manifested in his love of all forms of imperfect illumination. When intending to cast a veil of perfect gloom over his version of Eloisa's letter to Abelard, Pope (1688—1744) very fitly selected Milton for his model. Pope's remarkable poem, which Johnson described as "one of the most happy productions of human wit," is sprinkled over with Miltonic phrases and conceptions, of which only a few specimens can be quoted:

In these deep solitudes and awful cells,
 Where *heavenly-pensive Contemplation* dwells . . . (ll. 1 f.)
 (Cp. *Il Penseroso* l. 54, *Comus* ll. 376 f.)
 Ye *grotts and caverns shagged with horrid thorn* . . . (l. 20)
 (Cp. *Comus* l. 429)

Where awful arches make a noon-day night,
 And the *dim windows* shed a solemn light . . . (ll. 43 f.)
 (Cp. *Il Penseroso* ll. 159 f.)

But o'er the *twilight groves* and dusky caves,
 Long-sounding aisles, and intermingled graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
 A deathlike silence, and a dread repose:
 Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
 Shades every flower, and darkens every green,
 Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
 And breathes a *browner* horror on the woods. (ll. 163 ff.)
 (Cp. *Il Penseroso* ll. 12—16, l. 133, l. 134)

Addison (1672—1719) has left a fragment very significantly entitled: *Milton's Style Imitated in a translation of A Story out of the Third Eneid*, from which the following quotations are taken. The fragment begins thus:

Lost in the gloomy horror of the night,
 We struck upon the coast where Aetna lies,
 Horrid and waste, its entrails fraught with fire,
 That now casts out dark fumes and pitchy clouds. . .
 Here in the shelter of the woods we lodged . . .
 . . . for all the night.
 A murky storm deep louring o'er our heads
 Hung imminent, that with imperious gloom
 Opposed itself to Cynthia's silver ray
 And shaded all beneath , . .

III.

HIS BLINDNESS DUE TO GLAUCOMA

About the year 1652, in his 44th year of age, Milton became completely blind. He refers to this event in *Paradise Lost* III. 25—6, saying of his eyes:

So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs
Or dim suffusion veiled.

According to Pattison's interpretation of the above passage, Milton hesitated between Amaurosis (drop serene) and Cataract (suffusion) as the cause of the fatal event. Pattison adds that the nature of Milton's disease is not ascertainable. Stern finds the symptoms more like those of Glaucoma.

The same view was expressed by Hirschberg in his History of Ophthalmology (*Geschichte der Augenheilkunde* IV. § 637). This eminent ophthalmologist kindly confirmed this statement in a letter addressed to the present writer, in which reference is made to Milton's circumstantial account of his symptoms contained in his letter to Philara, dated September 28th, 1654. The seeing of an "iris" mentioned by Milton as one of the symptoms is said to be the item decisive in favour of Glaucoma.

It appears from the same letter to Philara that the fatal disease had been coming on for some eight years before the process was completed, so that 1644 is the earliest date when the symptoms of glaucoma can have made themselves felt. The "weakness" of the poet's eyes, so notable before that date, cannot, therefore, be explained as in any way connected with the attack of glaucoma. There must have been other causes, evidently of a constitutional character. — See on this question the detailed discussion contained in the present writer's treatise *Milton's Eyesight and the Chronology of his Works* (Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Dorpatensis, Humaniora 1924).

Note. Extract from the letter to Philara, dated September 28th, 1654 in the translation made by Robert Fellowes, as reprinted in Fletcher's Edition of the *Prose Works of Milton* (p. 958a):

It is now, I think, about ten years since I perceived my vision to grow weak and dull; and, at the same time, I was troubled with pain in my kidneys and bowels . . . In the morning, if I began to read, as was my custom, my eyes instantly ached intensely, but were refreshed after a little corporal exercise. The candle which I looked at seemed as it were encircled with a rainbow (*quam aspexissem lucernam, iris quaedam visa est redimere*). Not long after the sight in the left part of the left eye — which I lost some years before the other — became quite obscured; and prevented me from discerning any object

on that side. The sight in my other eye has now been gradually and sensibly vanishing away for about three years; some months before it had entirely perished, though I stood motionless, every thing which I looked at seemed in motion to and fro. A stiff cloudy vapour seemed to have settled on my forehead and temples, which usually occasions a sort of somnolent pressure upon my eyes, and particularly from dinner till the evening . . . I ought not to omit that, while I had any sight left, as soon as I lay down on my bed and turned on either side, a flood of light used to gush from my eyelids. Then as my sight became daily more impaired, the colours became more faint, and were emitted with a certain inward crackling sound; but at present every species of illumination being, as it were, extinguished, there is diffused around me nothing but darkness, or darkness mingled and streaked with an ashy brown. Yet the darkness in which I am perpetually immersed, seems always, both by night and day, to approach nearer to white than black, and when the eye is rolling in its socket, it admits a little particle of light as through a chink.

IV.

HIS PHOTOPHOBIA DUE TO ALBINISM

To the close observer, this "weakness" of Milton's sight assumes the character of a strong and habitual "dread of light", or photophobia; however sensitive he seems to have been to light, he yet shunned it, to move about in the dark. It is well known that such is the typical conduct of albinos. And it is indeed the purpose of the present treatise to prove that Milton was an Albino, and that this fact explains many strange details both in his life and in his works.

Of course the question will be asked, Why was this fact not discovered before? The reply will be that albinism as an organic disease was unknown to Milton's contemporaries, and that, moreover, some of the more remarkable symptoms, viz. those connected with his abnormal vision, disappeared together with his eyesight in his later life when he had begun to attract the attention of the public.

The proofs may be grouped under three heads:

- (1) **The Conduct of his Art.** — The broad basis upon which the theory rests is provided by the remarkable Photophobia and Nyctalopia displayed in the works written *before* his blindness.
- (2) **His Habits.** — In actual life, Milton seems to have avoided moving about in the light, notably before his blindness.
- (3) **The Descriptions of his Personal Appearance, and his Portraits.** — He is described as exhibiting the typical outward symptoms of albinism.

Note. Albinism as a complex of organic phenomena is said to have been discovered by Lionel Wafer among the natives of Central America. See his *New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of Panama*, London 1688, vol. III. p. 382.

V.

HIS ALBINOTIC APPEARANCE

The third point must be discussed first. The albino is recognized above all by his white skin and his white hair. It will be necessary to settle this point at the very outset; for all arguments derived from other sources would be useless if it was certain, or even only likely, that Milton with regard to the colour of his hair and skin was not different from his fellows, or that he even was remarkable for his exceptional beauty, as is now generally held as part of the modern Milton legend.

VI.

THE EVIDENCE FROM AUBREY'S NOTES

The most reliable description of Milton's personal appearance is contained in the manuscript of Aubrey, the antiquary (1626—97), which is preserved in the Bodleian Library. It was edited, together with an excellent introduction, by A. Stern in his compendious biography of the poet (*Milton und seine Zeit* I. pp. 335—44). Aubrey wrote his notes apparently about the year 1680, six years after the poet's death whom he had known personally. These notes were intended to serve his friend Anthony à Wood (1632—95) as the basis of a Life of Milton

in the former's *Athenae et Fasti Oxonienses* (1690—92). About Milton's appearance, Aubrey makes the following statement:

abroun
He had light browne hayre.
exceeding
His complexion very fayre. (He was so faire that they
called him the lady of Christ-Coll.)

In this passage, 'abroun' is written above *browne*; underneath the word *exceeding* appears the adverb *very*. Both the words thus paraphrased, i. e. *abroun* and *exceeding*, are remarkable in their application, and seem to indicate unusual conditions.

VII.

THE MEANING OF "AUBURN"

These substitutions are, indeed, of extreme importance; of the former (*auburn* for *light-brown*) it might be said more particularly that the whole theory depended upon its correct interpretation. Up to the publication of the present writer's pamphlet entitled *Milton und das Licht* (Niemeyer, Halle 1920), no one seems to have seen anything peculiar in this passage. The general assumption is that *abroun* is no more than a phantastic spelling for *auburn*, which was erroneously connected with the colour-name *brown* by early writers. Starting from this point, the belief prevails that *auburn* and *light brown* were intended for mere synonyms in Aubrey's report, descriptive of one and the same colour. It is quite true, of course, that *auburn* now stands for some distinctly brownish tinge. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines the modern colour-name *auburn* as meaning "golden-brown (usually of hair)". The *New English Dictionary* treats the word historically, and defines its meaning as follows: "Of a yellowish- or brownish-white colour; now, of a golden-brown or ruddy-brown colour". The *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, again, words its explanation differently: "Ruddy-brown; the meaning has changed from the original one of brownish-white or light yellow (*citrinus* in *Promptorium Parvulorum*) probably through the intensification of the idea of brown caused by the early spelling *abron* and *abrown*."

From the facts collected by the editors of the *New English* (or *Oxford*) *Dictionary*, to which the reader must be referred for further details, it is evident that the modern meaning is of but recent origin. This interesting word is ultimately derived from Latin *alburnum* "whitish"; in medieval Latin this word had the same meaning; Du Cange, in his *Glossarium Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* renders it by "subalbum". It first passed into French, and was received into English as *auburn* or *aulburn*, etc. The word retained its original meaning until the 18th century, and in Milton's time it was still far from being synonymous with "light-brown". This is proved by the following quotations given in the *New English Dictionary*:

A. D. 1580 light auborne = subflavus, subutilus.

1591 rojo = abrun headed, subrufus.

1649 his hair was auburn, a colour between white and red.

To these must be added the most important quotation of all which is taken from Florio's famous Italian-English Dictionary *A World of Wonder* (1598), and which has been reprinted by Schmidt in his *Shakespeare Lexicon* under *auburn*:

Also that whitish colour of women's hair which we call an Alburne or Abrune colour.

VIII.

THE WORD "AUBURN" IN SHAKESPEARE

The word *auburn* occurs twice in Shakespeare's dramatic works, and is translated by Schmidt by "*probably* whitish, flaxen". The two places are: *Coriolanus* II. 3. 21, and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* IV. 4. 194:

(1) Not that our heads are some brown, some auburn, some bald...

(2) Her hair is auburn, mine is perfect yellow...

It appears from the context that the lady with "auburn" hair is "fairer" than the one with "yellow" hair. In the former quotation, "brown" and "auburn" are strongly contrasted, and it seems indeed evident that "auburn" was intended for the brightest colour which the human hair can assume, i. e. "whitish".

Kellner, in his more recent *Shakespeare-Wörterbuch* (1922) refers to the former passage only, rendering the crucial word by (German) "blond", which does not mark an advance beyond his predecessor.

IX.

AUBREY'S CONDUCT

Aubrey's conduct is not difficult to interpret in the light thrown by history upon the colour-name under discussion. He had known Milton in his old age only, and he would, thus, ascribe the whiteness of his hair to his advanced years, although the trained eye cannot fail to distinguish between the yellowish or slightly reddish white of the albino's hair and the snowy white of old age. When Aubrey compiled his notes for Wood, he naturally wished to describe the colour of the poet's hair as it had been in middle life (see G. C. Williamson, *The Portraits . . . of John Milton*, Cambridge 1908, p. 24). Somehow he was induced to think that it had been "light-brown", and he put this down accordingly. Later on, however, he received further and more accurate information; and, conscientious collector of facts that he was, he at once recorded the new item, as was his custom in such cases: he wrote the correct colour-name, viz. "auburn", over the original "light-brown".

X.

EVIDENCE OF THE OTHER EARLY BIOGRAPHERS

The statements made by the other early biographers to the effect that Milton's hair was "light-brown" cannot destroy Aubrey's testimony as interpreted above. The most notable among the documents of this class is the *Life of Milton* by an unknown author discovered in 1889 among the papers of Anthony à Wood, and edited by E. S. Parsons in the *English Historical Review* for January 1902, under the somewhat misleading title of *The Earliest Life of Milton*. Mr. Parsons makes the wholly unwarranted suggestion that the author of this biographical compilation may very probably have been the poet's physician, Dr. Nathaniel Paget. To judge by the matter-of-fact nature of this account, and by the complete lack of any personal touches, it must be the work of a mere compiler writing from notes collected after the poet's death. An explanation of the curious misunderstanding concerning the colour of Milton's hair will be given presently.

XI.

THE EVIDENCE OF THE PORTRAITS

From the purely philological point of view, no objection can be raised against the conclusion that Aubrey, after fuller information received, wished to state that Milton's hair in middle life was "whitish". But there remains the testimony of the portraits to consider. At the very outset it is necessary to remind oneself that portraits from the time of Milton cannot be regarded as absolutely reliable documents. Painters at all periods have been only too much inclined to yield to a desire to please their patrons, or to express certain aesthetic ideals, rather than keep close to nature in their portrait work. Nevertheless, an attempt must be made to reconcile the result obtained from an interpretation of Aubrey's words with the testimony of the genuine portraits extant.

According to Dr. Williamson (p. 37), there exist, at the present day, three authentic contemporary coloured portraits of the poet, viz.:

- (1) The Passmore Edwards Portrait, by Cornelis Janssen (or Janssons). The hair is "auburn", in the modern sense, i. e. golden-brown.
- (2) The Onslow Portrait. The hair is "fair".
- (3) The Woodcock Miniature, discovered and owned by Dr. Williamson (see pp. 23—4 of his treatise). The Doctor's very important description of this invaluable document is: "Long fair hair, very pallid countenance" (p. 31).

Note. There exists evidence of two further coloured portraits which seems worth recording. (a) A portrait painted on wood, now lost, was reproduced in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for September 1787. The hair in the original was stated to be "red". Dr. Williamson thinks this portrait has some claims to authenticity (p. 3). (b) Stern (I. p. 317) reports that, in the summer of 1871, he saw in the South Kensington Museum a miniature portrait of Milton, half-length, rather young, about thirty-five, but — much to his surprise — with fair hair falling to the neck, and blue eyes! — This portrait seems to have disappeared since, as it is not mentioned in Dr. Williamson's catalogue.

XII.

THE PORTRAITS EXAMINED

Thus the evidence is, numerically speaking, clearly in favour of a colour which is not "light-brown". The problem why Janssen painted the boy with light-brown hair will be discussed later. It is first necessary to ascertain, if possible, the exact shade of the "fair" hair indicated by the majority of the portraits, viz. Nos (2) and (3). For this purpose, the Onslow portrait may be dismissed at once, as the picture is not the original one, direct from the artist's studio, but only a late, if certified, copy made in the year 1792. There remains only the Woodcock Miniature. In reply to a letter of inquiry, Dr. G. C. Williamson, under date of December 21st, 1921, described the colour of the hair in it as follows: "On the flaxen side, with a *slight* reddish tinge". This reply tallies with the interpretation of the meaning of Aubrey's "auburn" proposed by the present writer long before he knew of the existence of the miniature. In the original letter the word "slight" appears twice underlined; the red tinge, thus, plays a very subordinate part. The description of the colour of the hair as furnished by Dr. Williamson would fit the hair of most albinos.

In a paper contributed to the *Outlook* for April 15th, 1922, Dr. Williamson fully confirms his former statement. He says: "The Woodcock Miniature certainly shows him with quite fair hair, on the whitish side, and the general effect certainly seems to be in the portrait that the hair was unusually whitish" (p. 299).

In conclusion, the remark may be added that miniatures were then what photographs are at the present day, and that, as a rule, they are truer to nature, if less artistic, than ordinary portraits.

XIII.

EVIDENCE OF THE LOCKS OF HAIR HANDED DOWN
TO POSTERITY

It appears from two allusions in the poetry of Keats that the latter somewhere had seen a lock of hair purporting to be Milton's. He describes its colour as "bright" and as "fair":

- (1) A lock of thy *bright* hair —
Sudden it came . . .

(*Lines on seeing a Lock of Milton's Hair*, ll. 37 f.)

- (2) Of *fair-haired* Milton's eloquent distress . . .

(*Keen, fitful gusts are whisp'ring here and there* . . . l. 11)

Dr. Williamson, in the article quoted above, draws attention to two locks alleged to be Milton's "which have been known to exist. One was the lock which was sold at Sotheby's in 1913, and which belonged to Addison, Dr. Johnson, Leigh Hunt, and the Brownings. The other came out of the Leigh Hunt collection, and was sold in Chancery Lane, and that had been given by Dr. Johnson to Hoole, by Hoole to Dr. Barry, and by Barry to Leigh Hunt" (p. 299). Keats, who was at one time very intimate with Leigh Hunt, probably saw one of these identical locks at his friend's residence.

Dr. Williamson goes on to say: "Both these locks are now in America, and both of them may be termed light brown hair, certainly on the whitish side, and by no means a deep brown". Evidently, the writer cannot get away from the tradition which ascribes brown hair to the poet. If the locks are "fair" and "whitish", they cannot possibly be "brown" at the same time, whatever the shade or tinge. Keats would never have called a "brown" lock "bright" and "fair".

XIV.

ORIGIN OF THE LEGEND CONCERNING THE COLOUR OF MILTON'S HAIR

Against the evidence in favour of "auburn", which is to be interpreted as meaning "whitish, flaxen", there must be set both Aubrey's original statement and the testimony of many other reporters, among whom the compiler of the so-called *Earliest Life of Milton* is the most prominent. As a matter of fact, there must have grown up a definite tradition affirming Milton's hair in middle life to have been "light-brown". This statement is repeated, e. g., by the painters Jonathan Richardson (1665—1745), and George Vertue (1684—1756). As Masson in his monumental

Life of John Milton (1859—80) adopted and propagated this notion, it became firmly rooted in the minds of all students of the great poet's biography. It must, nevertheless, be rejected. The origin of this error may be discovered in the portrait by Janssen. Applying certain aesthetic principles to his art, and wishing, perhaps, to please his patron, i. e. Milton's father, at the same time, he rendered the boy with light-brown hair. This seems the only possible explanation in view of the conflicting evidence. It would be very useful to know whether this artist was in the habit of painting all his subjects with brown hair. In order to determine this point, all existing portraits by him should be examined. Thus, the hair in two portraits out of three owned by the National Gallery is described in the catalogue as "brown" and "light-brown" respectively; the colour in the third portrait is not mentioned.

Even in modern times, portrait painters will deviate from the truth of nature for the sake of artistic effect. Thus, the famous Lenbach is reported to have painted a lady with fair instead of brown hair because, he explained, it made her look more beautiful.

Janssen was a highly esteemed artist in the 17th century, and Milton may have been rather proud of having been painted by him. The picture of the handsome boy of ten, with his close-cropped light-brown hair, was in the possession of the poet; for it passed into his widow's hands after his death (see Dr. Williamson's treatise, p. 121). It is hardly overstepping the bounds of probability to assume that this picture was displayed in a prominent place in the aging poet's house, where all visitors would see it. In order not to cast discredit upon the likeness, Milton was, perhaps, not eager to contradict the portrait's evidence as to the colour of the boy's hair. Aubrey knew the picture well, for he considered it necessary to explain, in his notes, why the boy was painted with his hair short, and not falling to the neck; for Milton always wore his hair long, except during the period when he was under a Puritan tutor.

It must be borne in mind that all the statements alleging Milton's hair (in middle life) to have been light-brown were written down after the poet's death, and that none of the reporters had known him in his middle period. All these men very naturally considered Janssen's picture sufficient evidence.

XV.

MILTON'S MANNER OF WEARING HIS HAIR

Milton generally wore his hair long, as is attested by all his portraits, except the Janssen one. The unusual feature of the latter portrait appeared so remarkable to Aubrey that he felt compelled to add an explanation. He writes in his notes: "Ao. Dni. 1619. He was ten years old, as by his picture and was then a poet: his school master was then a Puritan in Essex, who cut his (i. e. Milton's) hair short". Milton evidently pretended to be particularly fond of the very exceptional colour of his hair, and displayed the latter lavishly. Something similar is suggested of the Portuguese troubadour Martim Alvelo (i. e. "whiteling") who is supposed to have worn his "luxuriant pale mane falling down upon his shoulders in the manner of women and artists, thus making a strong point of his serious weakness" (see Carolina Michaelis de Vasconcellos, *Randglossen zum altportugiesischen Liederbuch*, in *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* XX. p. 161). Alvelo, too, is supposed to have been an albino.

In his poetry, Milton is fond of describing characters with long and shining hair, with whom he seems to have identified himself in some respects. Of the Lady in *Comus*, e. g., he says:

What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn? (ll. 752 f.)

Even at the risk of being thought extravagant, the present writer ventures to suggest that the "love-darting eyes" contain an allusion to the continuous swaying movement of the albinotic eye which is described as nystagmus. The "vermeil-tinctured lip" seems to be a reference to another peculiarity of the albinotic type.

Adam in *Paradise Lost* has been supposed by many critics to wear the features of Milton; see in particular book IV. ll. 300 ff.:

His fair large front and eye sublime declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.

It is generally agreed that Milton portrayed himself in the figure of Samson to whom he felt attracted not only by his own blindness,

but also by the legend that the former's extraordinary strength resided in his long and beautiful hair.

XVI.

MILTON'S COMPLEXION

As to Milton's complexion, it is said by Aubrey to have been "exceeding fayre". Stern reports that the adverb "very" is written *underneath* the word "exceeding". Is it, therefore, to be assumed that "exceeding" was intended as an improvement on the more colourless "very"? Just as in the analogous case of the colour of the hair, Aubrey seems to have received a more authentic report after he had jotted down his original draft. His new and more reliable informant apparently dwelt most emphatically on the two most outstanding peculiarities in the outward appearance of the albino: the whitish (auburn) hair, and the remarkably "fair", i. e. white, skin. The adverb "very" was thus replaced by the strongest word the language afforded.

Note. Stern's explanation concerning the relative position of the words *exceeding* and *very* is ambiguous. It has been interpreted to mean that *exceeding*, being above *very*, was added by way of correction. There seems to be no point in paraphrasing such a strong word as *exceeding* by the commonplace *very*. A re-examination of the manuscript might settle the question.

XVII.

MEANING OF THE WORD "FAYRE"

In present-day usage "a fair complexion" is one which is "blond, not dark" (*Concise Oxford Dictionary*, under "fair"); but in the 17th century the word "fair", when applied to the skin, must have had a slightly different meaning. It is impossible to explain Aubrey's expression as meaning simply "a very delicate white and red" as is done by Masson and most other biographers who come after him. "Fair", when applied to the skin, means "white". To support this view, the following quotations from the *New English Dictionary* (under "fair") may be adduced:

A. D. 1554 Women are fairer than the Flower delyce,
Ruddye as the rose.

(Here the white colour is plainly opposed to the red.)

1661 "Negroes" are contrasted with "fair folk".

1774 In all regions the children are born fair or at least red.
(Again, "fair" is contrasted with "red".)

1803 Persons who have the fairest skin.

To these may be added a passage from Young's *Night Thoughts*:

1743 Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,
Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair.

(IV. ll. 353 f.)

XVIII.

THE EXCEPTIONAL WHITENESS OF MILTON'S SKIN

Aubrey thus wishes to express that Milton's complexion was extremely white. This interpretation of his words is supported by the description of the Woodcock Miniature which is, according to Dr. Williamson's wording, remarkable for its "very pallid countenance" (*The Portraits of John Milton*, p. 31). Of the aged Milton, the following report is extant: Dr. Wright found him in a small chamber, neatly dressed in black, "pale, but not cadaverous". This remark exactly tallies with Sachs's description of the albinotic skin, which, he says, is "remarkably white" (*insigniter albus*) but not "cadaverous" (*cadaverosus*). (See §§ 23 and 26 of the treatise mentioned in the next chapter).

This extreme whiteness of the skin does not, however, imply the total absence of colour. The blood may shine through in some places, notably in the cheeks. Of this matter Sachs says: "The face (of the albino) is coloured a pale red, slightly raised in the cheeks" (*facies tincta est rubore pallido, in genis parum altiore*, § 23). These conditions are well illustrated in the portrait of an albinotic boy prefixed to the rare and interesting treatise by Mansfeld, entitled *Über das Wesen der Leukopathie oder des Albinismus* (Braunschweig 1822). Mansfeld says that the skin of the albino is of an exceptional whiteness, which whiteness is rendered all the more remarkable by a peculiar redness which distinguishes certain parts of the body (p. 10). These considerations will help in interpreting what Milton's daughter Deborah

stated concerning her father's personal appearance. When questioned on this point by Vertue, the artist, she told him that "her father was of a fair complexion, a little red in the cheeks". Of what other great man do we possess so many and so strangely worded accounts concerning the colour of his hair and of his complexion?

XIX.

THE NATURE OF ALBINISM

Having shown that Milton's personal appearance was in perfect keeping with the theory of his albinism, the main obstacle to this proposition may be declared to have been removed, so that the other aspects may now be discussed. The following description of albinism is based partly on different encyclopaedias (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, *La Grande Encyclopédie*, *Handbuch der gesamten Augenheilkunde*, *Realencyclopädie der gesamten Heilkunde*, etc.), partly on direct observation, and above all on that extremely valuable treatise by the German physician G. T. L. Sachs, entitled *Historia Naturalis Duorum Leucaethiopum, auctoris ipsius, et sororis eius* (Sulzbach 1812), "Natural History of two Albinos, of the author himself, and of his sister". In this book, the author describes his own case and that of his sister, who were both albinos. The strange term "white negro" (*leucaethiops*) requires explanation. The first albinos to be systematically described belonged to coloured races for very obvious reasons; when it was realized that the same natural phenomenon occurred among the white races, too, the original term was often retained. (See on this question: E. Epstein, *Zur Ethnologie und Synonymik des Albinos*, in *Mitteilungen zur Geschichte der Medizin*, XIV. p. 295.)

Albinism is produced by congenital absence of the colouring-matter in the body. It is an incurable disease. Many physiologists are of opinion that albinism is often due to consanguinity of the parents. The blood of the albino lacks the faculty of producing the pigment present in the normal individual. The absence of colouring substance is particularly noticeable in the skin, the hair, and the eyes.

The skin shows a whitish colour over the whole body. In certain cases, however, it may be of a more or less reddish colour, over the whole body, or in the cheeks only.

The hair of the head is of a yellowish or reddish white, sometimes quite white, very soft, and silky.

The pupils of the eyes appear bright red sometimes. The irides may also be reddish, but are frequently light blue. There are albinos, however, in whom the red light of the pupils is by no means a regular feature. The present writer, e. g., knows an albino in whom he has never been able to observe the flash of the pupils. Sachs tells us that in himself and in his sister this "*fulgor oculorum*" was by no means constantly present. It was most noticeable immediately after birth and during infancy; later on, it decreased considerably in vigour, and it was observed less frequently (see § 112). This comparative rarity of the red light from the pupils may account for its not being mentioned by any of Milton's biographers. Moreover, this phenomenon would become impossible altogether after the destruction of the internal organs of the eye by the attack of glaucoma. The following passages may, by a bold conjecture, be interpreted as inspired by the poet's self-observation; they are all taken from the first book of *Paradise Lost*:

(1) "...round he (i. e. Satan) throws his *baleful eyes* ... (l. 56)

(2) Thus Satan ...

With head uplift above the wave, and *eyes*

That *sparkling blazed* ... (ll. 192 ff.)

(3) ... He through the armed files

Darts his experienced *eye* ... (ll. 567 f.)

(4) ... Darkened so, yet shone

Above them all the Archangel: but his face

Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and *care*

Sat on his *faded cheek*, but under *brows*

Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride

Waiting revenge. *Cruel* his *eye*, but cast

Signs of remorse and passion ... (ll. 599 ff.)

(In the opinion of the present writer, various albinotic peculiarities seem to be referred to in the above extract, viz. first, the so-called albinotic facies, which term will be explained below: compare the reference to "*scars*" and "*brows*"; second, "*the faded cheek*"; and third, the "*cruel*", i. e. sparkling eye.)

Albinos are generally of weak health; sometimes they show

other deformities: their hands may be too long, their heads too big, their necks too thick. This is, however, not an absolute rule. Sachs, e. g., tells his readers that he was of medium height, stout, rather muscular; his head was angular and larger than would have been normal; his chest broad, his neck and his lower extremities a little too short. He was a clever man, a doctor of medicine and surgery of the University of Erlangen; his book makes a most excellent impression. It is by no means the rule that albinos are idiots. The present writer is personally acquainted with an albino who is a highly intelligent scholar having done, in spite of his extreme youth, most valuable work in his special branch of study.

XX.

EFFECTS OF ALBINISM ON THE EYESIGHT

The significance of Milton's alleged albinism does not, however lie in these externalities. The peculiarities of hair and complexion are mere symptoms which must be discussed to diagnose Milton's case. The investigator's principal concern is with the effect of albinism, i. e. lack of pigment, on the organ of vision. Albinos, whose choroid membrane and iris are completely deprived of pigment, are remarkable for vehement Photophobia and Heliophobia (dread of light and of the sun). The daylight, which is not absorbed by any dark pigment, passes through the iris unimpeded, and thus illumines the interior of the eye in an insufferable manner. Albinos are incapable of regulating the amount of light admitted into the eye by means of a narrowing of the pupil, because the membrane of the iris is itself transparent, and cannot act as a screen. Albinos dislike bright daylight; they see but badly in it. They often hold an arm or a hand over their eyes to shade them. They suffer from Nystagmus (continual horizontal swaying of the eyes), and a constant twinkling of the eyelids.

When the sun begins to set, their vision becomes clearer: the weaker and fractured rays of the sun no longer pierce the iris, and the process of seeing becomes similar to the normal one. This inability to see at all clearly except at night is called Nyctalopia. In consequence of this peculiarity, albinos love the illumination by stars and the moon, and they far prefer artificial light to bright daylight.

All albinos are exceedingly short-sighted and weak-sighted.

XXI.

METHOD OF INQUIRY

The above brief and very imperfect exposition of the nature of albinism will make it possible to proceed with the general argument. The examination of the oldest and most reliable report, that by Aubrey, together with the evidence of the portraits, has resulted in the conviction that there is nothing in Milton's personal appearance which speaks against the assumption that he was an albino. This assumption will be treated in the following chapters as a Working Hypothesis; i. e. the details of his biography as well as his works will be examined under this aspect. A large number of facts, often of slight importance in themselves, will thus be assembled, whose cumulative effect, it is hoped, will be favourable to the general proposition.

XXII.

ALBINISM IN MILTON'S FAMILY?

As albinism is said to be often due to consanguinity of the parents, it is of great interest to note that both grandmothers of Milton appear under the same name, viz. that of "Jeffrey" (also spelt "Jefferys"). It is the name of his maternal grandfather, and the maiden-name of his paternal grandmother. Masson does his very best to combat the idea that there could have been the slightest possibility of blood-relationship; but his arguments are not at all convincing, and it remains for future research to solve the difficulties of the Milton genealogy. If two of the poet's grandparents could be proved to have been brother and sister, he would have had only six great-grandparents instead of the normal eight.

Two persons in Milton's family may be suspected of albinism; viz., first, his sister Anne's child who died in infancy. This child was made the subject of an elegy by the poet, which piece bears the highly suggestive title: *On the Death of a Fair Infant dying of a Cough*. It is suggested that the word "fair" in this connection has the same meaning as in the description of the poet's personal appearance, and that the latter felt a particular sympathy for his little niece, that "fairest flower, no sooner blown but blasted" (l. 1), in whom he discovered a companion

in misfortune. Apart from the Latin address to his father, and the sonnet to his late wife, the poem on the Fair Infant is the only one composed on a member of his family.

The second person who may be suspected of albinism is the poet's youngest daughter Deborah. Of her it is reported that she was most like her father (as to the colour of her hair and complexion?), and that she suffered from the same defect of eyesight. There seem to have been attempts at co-ordinating the very disparate symptoms of albinism even in Milton's own time.

An inquiry ought to be instituted into the biographical remains of Milton's two nephews, Edward and John Phillips, with a view to discovering if either or both of them suffered from albinism. John, in his *Responsio* (printed by Fletcher on pp. 763—76 of his edition of Milton's *Prose Works*), in which he defends his uncle against an anonymous assailant, seems to be strongly influenced by photophobic notions. He calls the opponent "tenebrio", "homo obscurus", "nebulo", "in occulto latens"; the opponent's remark that "thieves fear the light" (*fures lucem timent*) calls forth his more particular rage. But he may only have been writing under the influence of his uncle's former photophobia. At the date of the publication of the *Responsio*, i. e. in 1651 or 1652, Milton was about to become completely blind (see Stern, III. p. 264).

XXIII.

THE LADY OF CHRIST'S

The exceptional paleness of Milton's complexion is referred to on several occasions. At Cambridge he was called "The Lady of Christ's", "because he was so fair", i. e. white. This is Aubrey's report. It is wrong to suppose, as is generally done, that Milton was called so because of "his good looks, his pure life, and refined manners" (quoted from an anonymous text-book of English Literature). Professor Saintsbury says that "the celebrated nickname admits of — and has been fitted with — both interpretations — that of a compliment to his beauty and that of a sneer at him as a milksop" (*Cambridge History of English Literature* VII. p. 97). Since "fair", however, means "white" and not "beautiful", the former alternative may be dismissed. Moreover, it is a well-

known fact that albinos are often called "effeminate" because of their girlish looks.

XXIV.

"NIHIL EXSANGUIUS"

Another reference to Milton's paleness also is of an uncomplimentary nature, and comes from the author of the *Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Coelum* (1652). This man had introduced most insulting allusions to Milton's personal appearance; he had spoken of his small stature and of his extremely bloodless face. To these taunts Milton replied as follows: "My face, which is said to indicate a total privation of blood, is of a complexion entirely opposite to the pale and the cadaverous (on the typical use of this word see chapter XVIII, above); so that, though I am more than forty years old, there is scarcely any one to whom I do not appear ten years younger than I am; and the smoothness of my skin is not in the least affected by the wrinkles of age" (*Defensio Secunda*, Fletcher p. 926a). It is a typical feature in albinos that they do not seem to grow old because their complexion does not change colour. Toland in his *Life of Milton* speaks of the same matter when remarking that the poet's complexion was "wonderfully fair when a youth, and ruddy to the very last".

Note. One might argue against the above deduction that the testimony of enemies should not be used in such matters. It is admitted that their statements cannot be taken quite literally; but on the other hand it would be wrong to say that there was not, at least, a grain of truth in them. It is not very likely that a man of normal size should be called a "pigmy", or that a person with a normal complexion should be styled "most bloodless". It is not simply a case of "Semper aliquid haeret". And does not the highly emotional nature of Milton's circumstantial reply prove that the dart aimed at his weak spot had hit the mark?

XXV.

"OCULORUM NATURALIS DEBILITAS"

In his *Second Defence* (1654), Milton explained that his eyes were naturally weak from the very beginning, and that he was subject

to frequent headaches. As he mentions the latter in close connection with his eye-troubles one may draw the conclusion that they were caused by the strain of trying to see under unfavourable conditions of illumination. Compare on this subject the following remark made by Sachs: "These albinos (i. e. he himself and his sister) dislike and fly from any brighter light, especially if it falls into their eyes from different directions. Such light creates a feeling which is not real pain, but some unpleasant sensation in the eyes difficult to describe, which passes on to the forepart of the brain if the light continues to trouble the eyes" (§ 136).

XXVI.

"A GRIM LOWERING FOOL"

In the same place, Sachs says that under the conditions described, i. e. with the light falling into the eyes from different directions, the albinos "cannot but move all shade-yielding organs with which the eyes are supplied to shut out the light" (§ 136). In another place he gives the details of this process. As the contraction of the iris fails to protect the interior of the eye, "the lids are brought together so closely that not infrequently they appear quite shut". In very strong light he himself closes his right eye altogether. He goes on to explain: "Besides, they raise the skin of their cheeks, they lower and wrinkle their eyebrows, which hardly increases the beauty of the face" (§ 138; see also §§ 51, 52, 61). These practices give rise to the peculiar expression worn by albinos known as "albinotic facies". In his *Apology for Smectymnus* (1642, Fletcher, p. 78b), Milton defends himself against the accusation that he was "a personated grim lowering fool", which description seems to contain an allusion to his albinotic facies.

Notice in this connection that the word "frown" with its derivatives occurs eight times in the poems written before his blindness, and only three times in his later works: (1) *Comus* ll. 446, 666, 667; *Paradise Lost* IV. l. 924, II. ll. 106, 713, 719, 720; (2) *Paradise Lost* III. l. 424, VI. l. 260; *Samson* l. 948.

XXVII.

CURIOSITY ABOUT MILTON'S EYE-TROUBLES

Milton's eye-troubles must have excited the curiosity of his contemporaries, his enemies more particularly. In his *Defensio pro se*

(1655), he reproaches Morus with having tried to obtain information concerning this matter from his friend Hartlib. The book in which the results of these inquiries were published, entitled *Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Coelum*, was issued in 1652, i. e. in the very year when Milton became totally blind. In it, he was taunted with "removable eyes" (*oculi exemptiles*, Fletcher p. 745a), and "Lamias' eyes" (*Lamiarum oculi*, ib.). "Lamia" is the name of a Roman mythological figure, representing a female evil spirit (*Empusa*), a robber of children, whose eyes were said to be removable; she was supposed to be able to take them out and put them in a box. The meaning of these uncommon allusions seems to be that Milton's eyes were of use to him at certain times only; his photophobia and nyctalopia, i. e. his inability to see clearly except at night, must have become known abroad. His blindness destroyed these symptoms and thus prevented their being described more accurately.

Note. The passage concerning Hartlib runs as follows: "Primum scripsisti ad Hartlibium, petens, ut mea, siquid haberem, posses excudere; et simul de mea oculorum calamitate, essemne omnino orbus luminum, sedulo et quasi dolens quae-sivisti . . ." (Fletcher p. 740a).

XXVIII.

THE BOY'S NOCTURNAL STUDIES

The examination of Milton's personal appearance having yielded satisfactory results, it is necessary to turn to an examination of his habits. In a famous passage, he tells us himself about his custom of working in the night: "My father" he says, "destined me from a child to the pursuits of literature; and my appetite for knowledge was so voracious, that, from twelve years of age, I hardly ever left my studies, or went to bed before midnight" (translated from *Defensio Secunda*, Fletcher p. 933a). It is quite natural that Milton should have tried to put a favourable interpretation upon his defects. It was from love of study that he stayed up late — or rather it was because in the daytime the strong light made prolonged reading painful or even impossible. Sachs says that "albinos may read ordinary books, and write on white paper fairly legibly for several hours together by the light of a thick candle, if they can place the latter as

they like, and bring their eyes and the book or papers into the proper position and distance, so that the light does not strike the eyes immediately" (§ 219).

Aubrey reports, on the authority of the poet's brother, that their father "ordered a maid to sit up for him", which he certainly would not have done if there had not been a very special reason for such an extraordinary arrangement. He also engaged a private teacher for him, so that he might be instructed at home under more favourable circumstances than prevailed at an ordinary school. St. Paul's School he does not seem to have entered until he had completed his fourteenth year (Stern, I. p. 30).

It is generally assumed that all those special efforts were made because of the precocity of the boy. This interpretation does not, however, agree with the results of Milton's studies. He never distinguished himself in his scholastic and academic career. He entered the university comparatively late, viz. in his seventeenth year of age, two years later than his friend Diodati (Masson, I. pp. 88, 80), and four years later than Andrew Marvell, the poet, who matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1633, at the age of thirteen (see *Dictionary of National Biography*). Milton remained in the university for seven years, without achieving any special result; and at the end of his course he was not given the slightest encouragement to stay on, though the life of a scholar would have suited his constitution best.

XXIX.

NIGHT WORK AT CAMBRIDGE

At the university, Milton, according to Wood, "as at school for three years before, 't was usual with him to sit up till midnight at his book, which was the first thing that brought his eyes into the danger of blindness". His nocturnal habits seem to have been one of the principal causes of his unpopularity, and it is a most significant fact that the first public oration he delivered at college should deal with the question "*Whether Day or Night is to be preferred?*" In the opening of his speech, Milton states that the whole assembly with but few exceptions are against him. "Such enmity may be created", he continues, "even at the university, by jealousy arising either out of the difference of studies, or out of a difference in the methods of pursuing these studies". (*Tantum*

potest ad simultates etiam in scholis aemulatio, vel diversa studia, vel in eisdem studiis diversa iudicia sequentium. Fletcher, p. 843a).

If the theory of Milton's albinism is accepted, the last remark will supply an explanation for the young student's conflict with his first tutor, Chappel. About this incident, Professor Saintsbury says that Milton "admits «indocility» and grumbles that he was not allowed to choose his own studies". The learned critic evidently bases his view on the identical passage from Milton's oration quoted above. But he does not realize that Milton's very serious quarrel with Chappel arose out of the latter's insisting on normal working hours being observed by his pupil. Milton confirms this interpretation in his *First Elegy*. He is telling his friend Diodati of his having been sent away from Cambridge. He is not sorry, however, nor does he long for "its bare plains which deny all pleasant shade". He cannot support the threats of a harsh master, and "other things against which his «genius» revolts" (*Caeteraque ingenio non subeunda meo*, l. 16). Warton remarks on this passage that "in these lines, *ingenium* is to be rendered «temper, nature, disposition» rather than «genius»". The eighteenth century critic comes very near the truth. Milton knew his *nature*, i. e. his peculiar weakness, only too well; the fact that nobody understood the cause of his complaint only tended to aggravate his suffering. The youth, whom an unsympathetic and violent tutor is trying to bully into submission against the laws of nature, is a truly tragic spectacle. No wonder that the exasperated pupil fired up at last, breaking the sacred rules of academic discipline. There exists no evidence to contradict Aubrey's statement that the rebellious student was severely punished for his stubbornness and sent away from college. But, fortunately, there must have been men among the college authorities less unfeeling and rigorous than Chappel. Milton's relatives and friends may have supplied information to explain his abnormal conduct. He was readmitted and placed under a different tutor, and allowed to proceed with his studies without the loss of a single term.

XXX.

HIS INABILITY TO ENTER PUBLIC LIFE

Milton, in spite of his unpopularity, stayed out his full time at the university. The life of a student and scholar was, after

all, to be preferred to that "in the world". His photophobia made it impossible for him to enter any of the professions. Though his relatives must have urged him to decide in favour of some remunerative employment, he could not make up his mind to do so. He was physically unfit for an active life among men. From his Latin poem addressed to his father it appears that both commerce and law were proposed to him by an impatient parent. But he declined, in order to hide himself from the eyes of the public (iamque nec obscurus populo miscebor inerti, *Ad Patrem*, l. 103), and to live a studious life at his father's country house at Horton. When at last, after his mother's death in 1637, which event is expressly mentioned in the famous autobiographical passage in *Defensio Secunda* as determining the end of his stay at Horton, having spent five years in seclusion, he made up his mind to take chambers in one of the Inns of Court, his lodgings must be in a place where he might at least have "the benefit of a pleasant and shady walk" (sicubi amoena et umbrosa ambulatio est, *Letter to Diodati*, dated London, September 23rd, 1637).

In Italy, the famous treasures of art accumulated in that country do not seem to have made any impression on him; no traces of their influence can be discovered in his literary remains: he simply did not see them because of his excessively weak sight. Nor does the poet anywhere derive inspiration from anything he might have seen or experienced during his passage across the Alps. On the contrary, all his descriptions of nature are of a highly literary character. (See on this point the present writer's treatise *Studies concerning the Origin of Paradise Lost*, Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Dorpatensis, Humaniora 1924, especially pp. 69 ff.)

After his return from his travels, undertaken, no doubt, in the hope of finding inspiration in the land of Ariosto and Tasso, he set up as a private teacher to have an occupation which did not necessitate his leaving home. It appears from various reports that he made his pupils read to him those Latin authors whom he did not yet know himself. This was done to "preserve" his eyes (Toland, *Life*; Phillips, *Life*). Later on, he seems to have performed his duties as Latin Secretary chiefly at his house, before as well as after his blindness, as is expressly pointed out by Masson (IV. pp. 84 ff.), for "albinos see much more distinctly in buildings than in the open" (Sachs, § 216).

At home, it was often possible to take measures against disagreeable forms of illumination, such as are described by Sachs who "frequently fixed curtains before the windows of his room on cloudy days, and even closed the shutters, especially in winter when the desire to exclude the cold was added, so that only as much light might enter as he required for reading and writing; and he praised this agreeable darkness highly" (§ 140).

XXXI.

"HIS MORNING HAUNTS"

In his *Apology for Smectymnuus*, Milton defends himself against certain remarks made by an antagonist with the purpose to revile his character. The antagonist pretends not to know where Milton's "morning haunts" are, i. e., it had been noticed that Milton avoided going out in the day-time. To this and other accusations he replies in a most characteristic fashion, explaining that he is in the habit of getting up early in order to make use of the morning-twilight, before the full daylight sets in and forces him to abstain from reading. This is, at least, what his words can be interpreted to mean. He says: "Those morning haunts are where they should be, at home; not sleeping, or concocting the surfeit of an irregular feast, but up and stirring, in winter often ere the sound of any bell awake men to labour, or to devotion; in summer oft with the bird that first rouses, or not much tardier, to read good authors, or cause them to be read, till the attention be weary, or memory have its full fraught: then with useful and generous labours preserving the body's health and hardiness . . . These are the morning practices: proceed now to the afternoon; *in playhouses*, he says, *and the bordelloes*." (Fletcher, pp. 79b, 80a). The opponent evidently wished to suggest that Milton went out late in the day only. The theatres referred to are those private ones at which the performances were given by the light of candles (see Sidney Lee, *Life of Shakespeare*, 1922, p. 66); they were roofed and thus different from the Elizabethan public theatres at which the performances took place in broad daylight. Milton, in *L'Allegro*, speaks of plays acted at this kind of theatre as forming part of the pleasures of the evening and night (ll. 130 ff.). Sachs informs his readers that he and

his sister "have remained for several hours in theatres and assembly halls, in the glare of many candles whose light was reflected by mirrors, without any trouble to their eyes" (§ 146).

XXXII.

MILTON'S FAVOURITE PERIODS OF THE DAY

In his *Lycidas*, Milton gives, under the disguise of pastoral imagery, an unmistakable description of his favourite hours: he mentions the early morning hours, the sunset, and the time extending from the rise of the evening star till after midnight (see special chapter on *Lycidas*, ch. LXXV, below). These are periods of agreeable illumination as opposed to the hours of full daylight. Sachs provides a systematic explanation of Milton's habits: "In the sunset, when the sky is clear," he writes, "both albinos are best pleased by that gentle and agreeable light which is sometimes remarkable for its manifold colours flooding the western sky, and also by the beautiful all-round illumination of the terrestrial objects. Then indeed all shade-yielding organs of the eye return into their natural positions, and the wide-open pupil delighted draws in the heavenly light. Then they enjoy walking about out of doors . . . or at least they love to be in a room from which they have a freer view towards the west".

"The same could be said of sunrise, but that men are affected by the latter differently in a few respects than by sunset. The eyes are agreeably flattered by the softer and sensibly decreasing light of the setting sun, whereas eager and refreshed by sleep they look forward to the growing day returning with the dawn. The former affects the whole body, the latter, however, the very soul" (§ 143). He adds, that sunrise and sunset are agreeable also on cloudy days, though in a less degree (§ 144).

Sachs's description provides an excellent explanation for Milton's peculiar aptitude for composition in the early morning hours. In the *Sixth Elegy*, Milton reports that he composed the *Nativity Ode* in the early morning; that the dawn of Christmas Day inspired those verses: "Illa sub auroram lux mihi prima tulit" (l. 88). The result shows that indeed his "very soul" must have been affected.

In a letter to Alexander Gill he says that he translated the

144th Psalm into Greek verse "without any previous deliberation, suddenly, he knew not by what sudden impulse before the dawn of light" (*nullo certe animi proposito, sed subito nescio quo impetu ante lucis exortum . . . December 4th, 1634*).

Compare on this subject Warton in his edition of the *Poems* (1785), p. 462, note on *Elegia Quinta*, l. 6.

XXXIII.

MILTON AND THE EQUINOXES

Another consequence of Milton's photophobia was his predilection for the darker half of the year. Winter with its short hours of daylight and its long nights must naturally have been more grateful to his eyesight than summer with its painful brilliance. Speaking of the composition of *Paradise Lost*, his nephew Edward Phillips reports of him that "his vein never flowed happily but from the autumnal equinox to the vernal; and that what he attempted at other times was never to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy never so much" (*Life of Milton*). It is, at first sight, not quite clear whether this statement refers to the whole of Milton's career, or only to the period of his composing the later books of *Paradise Lost*, as might be inferred from the words of Aubrey, who had the facts from Phillips, and who gives the following account: "All the time of writing his *Paradise Lost* his vein began at the autumnal equinoctial and ceased at the vernal or thereabouts (I believe about May) and this was 4 or 5 years of his doing it." The period specified by Aubrey falls within Milton's blindness. But as he speaks of "all the time of his writing *Paradise Lost*," the report which he received must also apply to the earlier books which were composed during the period of photophobia, and about which Phillips seems to have intended the information to be. In any case, such practice would be in perfect keeping with what is recorded of other albinos. Among the very first statements made to the present writer by an albino concerning his working habits was the following: That he loved winter (literally: "I am a winter-creature"), and that he made use of summer only to collect material for his scientific treatises, to be elaborated during the season of weak light, long nights, and short days.

XXXIV.

EFFECTS OF MILTON'S ALBINISM ON HIS LITERARY PRODUCTION

In the following chapters, the theory of Milton's albinism will again be treated as a working hypothesis which is proved in the application. If Milton really was an albino, he must have been suffering from a constant dread of light as long as he retained his power of vision. The problem of illumination must have been occupying his mind without remission. This state of his mind could not but find expression in his literary production: "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matth. 12. 34). An artist cannot help revealing himself in his works, for self-expression is the very essence of art. It is by expressing what occupies and troubles him that an author finds temporary relief. In this manner, all the desires, fears, and longings which fill his mind to overflowing find their way into his works. It is an essential part of criticism to discover and to describe these elements.

In an author, three different methods of self-revelation may be distinguished; he may betray the contents of his mind:

- (1) In the Selection and Elaboration of Plot.
- (2) In the Choice of Words.
- (3) In the Formation of new Words and Phrases.

The subject of self-revelation in literature has been most lucidly treated by Dr. Hans Sperber in his remarkable pamphlet entitled *Motiv und Wort* (Reisland, Leipzig 1918). In the practical part of his treatise, the author deals with the Austrian novelist Meyrink (author of *Das grüne Gesicht*, *Der Golem*, etc.). In Meyrink's works, Sperber discovers two notions which he calls "überwertig", i. e. "over-weighted", or "over-charged", viz. (1) the fear of suffocation; and (2) the fear of blindness. In the works of Milton belonging to the period before his sight was impaired by glaucoma, it is the ideas connected with the contrast between light and shade, and with everything related to this complex, that are "over-weighted". Every careful reader of his works having once had his attention drawn to this phenomenon will be able to verify this observation.

XXXV.

SELECTION AND ELABORATION OF PLOT

It can be laid down as a general rule that Milton, in the period before the first symptoms of incipient blindness made themselves felt, i. e. in the period of photophobia and nyctalopia, was incapable of moving about in an uncongenial light. This applies to all those pieces which contain any plot and which will be examined below with a view to proving the theory put forward. These pieces are the following:

DATE	TITLE
(1) 1626	Elegia Tertia
(2) 1626	In Obitum Praesulis Eliensis
(3) 1626	In Quintum Novembris
(4) 1627	Elegia Prima
(5) 1628	Elegia Septima
(6) 1629	Elegia Quinta
(7) 1629	Elegia Sexta
(8) 1629	Nativity Ode
(9) 1634	L'Allegro & Il Penseroso
(10) 1634	Arcades
(11) 1634	Comus
(12) 1637	Lycidas
(13) 1640	Epitaphium Damonis
(14) 1640?	Paradise Lost, Books IV & IX. 48 — c. 500
(15) 1640	
—44?	Paradise Lost, Books I. 1 — end & II

XXXVI.

ELEGIA TERTIA (1626)

At the beginning of the action, Hesperus, the evening-star, is just rising from the "waters of the setting sun" (*occiduis Hesperus exit aquis*, l. 32). This is a typical opening: The evening-star announces the beginning of the period of agreeable illumination. Compare *Comus* ll. 93 ff., *Paradise Lost* IX. ll. 48 ff. The poet retires to his bed and soon falls asleep. In his dream he has a glorious vision: a spacious plain flooded with the purple light of dawn. "The ground glittered, as when it reflects the manifold

hues of a rainbow in all its splendour". This passage strongly reminds of the statement made by Sachs to the effect that he as well as his sister liked best "that gentle and agreeable light which is sometimes remarkable for its manifold colours, and which floods the sky" at sunrise and sunset (§ 143). In another place, Sachs expresses his love of colour in words of quite exceptional intensity: "This subject" (viz. that of colour), he says, "upon which I am about to enter — for a short while only, alas! — is the most comprehensive, most precious, and most beautiful of all" (§ 149). Both albinos are "strongly affected by colours" (§ 151).

In full agreement with these remarks, Milton may be observed revelling in the descriptions of pleasant colours in the *Elegy* under review; compare, in Cowper's translation, the "silver current, golden sands, rosy bowers." The "mingled shade" (l. 51 of Cowper's translation) reminds of the "chequered shade" of *L'Allegro* (l. 96), and of the statement by Sachs that he and his sister liked to walk about in the open "in the morning and evening, more especially in places where the light is mixed with shade" (§ 139).

The coming of daylight puts an end to the poet's inspiration.

XXXVII.

IN OBITUM PRAESULIS ELIENSIS (1626)

In this piece, the reader accompanies the poet through the starry sky to the gates of Heaven. Milton does not venture into the regions of bliss and light: "For what mortal could utter the splendour of that place?" he exclaims.

XXXVIII.

IN QUINTUM NOVEMBRIS (1626)

The action of this much neglected poem begins in line 48. Satan is seen flying to Rome where he arrives under the most favourable circumstances: "The evening-twilight was already producing a dubious illumination... when the pope was being carried in procession round the town, accompanied by monks with burning candles" (ll. 54 ff.). Then they go into churches lighted by torches (l. 61). The coming of night is circumstantially described; Milton on this occasion gives names to the Horses of Night,

being the first poet to do so, as Warton remarks on this passage (see his edition of the *Poems*, p. 510, note on l. 71).

Before sunrise, Satan returns to the netherworld. Dawn but not full daylight is described at some length in many highly poetic expressions (ll. 133—38). Next the reader is taken to “a place covered with the eternal darkness of night” (l. 139); it is a “cave” (*spelunca*, *antrum*), which conception is frequently repeated (see more particularly ll. 151—53).

The rest of the poem contains a vague description of the Temple of Fame imitated from Ovid and Chaucer (see Warton’s notes). It was the acoustic, non-visual, character of this subject which attracted the poet. But this feature was not sufficient to induce him to elaborate this plot which did not allow him to introduce “photophobic” effects. He ends abruptly, “after curiosity had been excited by the introduction of the goddess Fame with so much pomp” (Warton, p. 521).

XXXIX.

ELEGIA PRIMA (1627)

In his First Elegy, Milton describes his life in London during his enforced absence from the university. “The town holds (i. e. shelters from light?) him“, for he is displeased with the bare fields surrounding Cambridge, because “they deny all pleasant shade” (*Nuda nec arva placent, umbrasque negantia molles*, l. 13). He is staying at his father’s house where he is absorbed in his books which are his life. When tired with too much study, he visits the theatres where, as was pointed out before, the performances took place by artificial light. Nor does he always remain pent-up in the house or in the town (*Sed neque sub tecto semper nec in urbe latemus*, l. 47); the beautiful spring-weather entices him into the suburban shady woods where the elm-tree grows (*Nos quoque lucus habet vicina consitus ulmo, Atque suburbani nobilis umbra loci*, ll. 49 f.). Warton’s remark on these lines is that “the gods had their favourite trees. So had the poets. Milton’s is the elm.” In support of this view he quotes the following passages: *L’Allegro*, l. 89, *Comus*, l. 354, *Epitaphium Damonis*, ll. 15, 49, *Paradise Lost*. V. l. 215. Compare also: “*Testor ipse lucos, et flumina, et dilectas villarum umos, sub quibus*

aestate proxime praeterita . . . summam cum musis gratiam habuisse me jucunda memoria recolo" (*Seventh Prolusion*, Fletcher, p. 856b). From all these passages it would appear that he must have loved this tree more than any other; and yet the Concordance shows that the elm is mentioned but four times in his English poems, and the oak eight times, the pine thirteen times, the cedar eight times, etc. It is the attendant circumstances accompanying the introduction of the name of the elm that must be held responsible for the impression. Critics have pointed out, that in reality the elm is the one tree that yields the least shade, and that Milton, therefore, must have been a bad observer of nature. The latter is quite true. V. P. Squires, in the article mentioned above (see chapter II) discovers in Milton "the effect of myopic vision" which is "to render outlines indistinct, and hence to make impressions indefinite. It is impossible to distinguish one sort of bird from another or one sort of tree from another, although the observer is fully aware that a bird or a tree is before him. This seems to have been the case with Milton" (pp. 472 f.). The fact is that Milton possessed hardly any direct knowledge of natural objects through the visual sense. "He saw nature," Dryden very acutely remarked, "through the spectacles of books." The albino with whom the present writer is acquainted when told of this remark of Dryden's at once rejoined: "This is exactly what I have always been saying of myself, without, however, introducing the figure of the spectacles."

XL.

ELEGIA SEPTIMA (1628)

This Elegy contains the important passage, quoted before, in which the poet complains of the weakness of his eyesight:

It was the spring, and newly-risen day
Peeped o'er the hamlets on the first of May;
My eyes, too tender for the blaze of light,
Still sought the shelter of retiring night.

(Cowper's translation, ll. 13 ff.)

In the course of the narrative, the poet ventures out into the open:

I shunned not, therefore, public haunts, but strayed
 Careless in city or suburban shade . . . (ib. ll. 51 f.)

A comparison with the Latin original will show that the translation is not quite correct:

Et modo qua nostri spatiantur in urbe quirites,
 Et modo villarum proxima rura placent. (ll. 51 f.)

Cowper, no doubt, thought to be writing in Milton's usual style when he decided to render "rura" by "shade". That word may just as well mean "open country." The most enthusiastic description of the light on that day leaves but little doubt that the poet meant to speak of one of those exceptional serene days which alone of all bright modes of illumination afford clear and grateful vision to the albino, as will be explained in the discussion of *L'Allegro* (see chapters I and LXIII, below). The line alluded to runs as follows:

Auctaque luce dies gemino fulgore coruscat . . . (l. 55),
 which Cowper renders:

Bright shone the vernal day, with double blaze . . .

XLI.

ELEGIA QUINTA (1629)

There is hardly any "plot" in this Elegy. The "Spirit" of the poet, freed from its "Body", is said to be rapt into the regions of imagination. The description of its journey is highly interesting as a document of Milton's photophobia:

Jam mihi mens liquidi raptatur in ardua caeli
 Perque vagas nubes corpore liber eo;
 Perque umbras, perque antra feror, penetralia vatum;
 Et mihi fana patent interiora deum;
 Intuiturque animus toto quid agatur Olympo,
 Nec fugiunt oculos Tartara caeca meos. (ll. 15 ff.)

I mount, and undepressed by cumbrous clay
 Through cloudy regions win my easy way;
 Rapt, through poetic shadowy haunts I fly;
 The shrines all open to my dauntless eye,

My spirit searches all the realms of light,
And no Tartarean gulfs elude my sight. (Cowper, ll. 15 ff.)

A comparison of these two texts will show that Milton, in the original, is clearly mindful of his photophobia, though unconsciously, and that Cowper somewhat spoils this effect in the translation. It is only the "Soul" that looks into Olympus, whereas his "Eyes" look into Tartarus, a region of darkness. The "shrines" (fana) are mentioned by Milton because they are places of agreeable illumination, just as the "caves" (antra), the "shades" (umbræ), etc.

The rest of the *Fifth Elegy* simply abounds in allusions to pleasant modes of illumination: morning and evening light, the shade of groves, moonlight, etc.

XLII.

ELEGIA SEXTA (1629) — HIS COSMOLOGICAL BENT

There is no proper plot in this rambling poem which contains some interesting autobiographical allusions. Milton in speaking of his muse calls her one that loves darkness:

At tua quid nostra prolectat Musa camoenam,
Nec sinit optatas posse sequi tenebras? (ll. 3 f.)

But wherefore should thy muse tempt mine away
From what she loves, from darkness into day? (Cowper)

In an important passage further down, Milton speaks of one of the favourite subjects of his poetry, the vast realms of imagination, Olympus and Tartarus (ll. 55—58). His inability to see clearly often left his mind vacant and forced it to roam the universe, in search of subject matter for thought and sentiment. "Strong emotions always take a cosmic turn with me," is the statement made to the present writer by an albino; "especially when under the impression of music and dramatic art." Something similar may be observed in Milton. Take, e. g., his elegy on the Death of the Bishop of Ely:

I bade adieu to bolts and bars,
And soared, with angels, to the stars,
Like him of old, to whom 'twas given
To mount on fiery wheels to heaven.

Boötes' waggon, slow with cold,
 Appalled me not: nor to behold
 The sword that vast Orion draws,
 Or even the Scorpion's horrid claws.
 Beyond the Sun's bright orb I fly,
 And far beneath my feet descry
 Night's dread goddess, seen with awe,
 Whom her winged dragons draw.
 Thus, ever wondering at my speed,
 Augmented still as I proceed,
 I pass the planetary sphere,
 The Milky Way — and now appear
 Heaven's crystal battlements, her door
 Of massy pearl, and emerald floor.

(Cowper's translation, ll. 45—62)

From the very beginning, it had been Milton's ambition to compose some grand poem on the origin and government of the universe; certain parts of *Paradise Lost* may be regarded as the final result of this early tendency, of which the first traces may be discovered in the lines that go by the name of *At a Vacation Exercise*: the young student — he was then nineteen years of age — is addressing his Native Language, asking her to aid him in his literary enterprise. He has to entertain his audience of fellow-students with topical subjects, but finds this task difficult. He is yearning for a more congenial theme:

Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
 Thy service in some graver subject use . . .
 Such where the deep transported mind may soar
 Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door
 Look in, and see each blissful deity
 How he before the thunderous throne doth lie . . .
 Then, passing through the spheres of watchful fire,
 And misty regions of wide air next under,
 And hills of snow and lotts of piled thunder,
 May tell at length how green-eyed Neptune raves . . .
 Then sing of secret things that came to pass
 When beldame Nature in her cradle was . . . (ll. 29—46)

This cosmological element, by engendering a sense of the eternal and universal, became one of the principal sources of

inspiration in the poet, and may be discovered as the driving force in the impulse towards the "Sublime Style".

The eminent French critic H. Taine seems to have vaguely felt this causal connection existing between Milton's visual peculiarities and his style. He writes: "Tout jeune encore, et au sortir de Cambridge, il se portait vers le magnifique et le grandiose; il avait besoin du grand vers roulant, de la strophe ample et sonnante, des périodes immenses de quatorze et de vingt-quatre vers. Il ne considérait point les objets face à face, et de plain-pied, en mortel, mais de haut comme ces archanges de Goethe (see *Faust*, Prologue in Heaven) qui embrassent d'un coup d'œil l'Océan entier heurté contre ses côtes, et la terre qui roule enveloppée dans l'harmonie des astres fraternels. Ce n'était point la *vie* qu'il sentait, comme les maîtres de la Renaissance, mais la *grandeur*, à la façon d'Eschyle et des prophètes hébreux. . ." (*Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*, II. La Renaissance, ch. VI). To have converted this impulse arising out of a cruel physical defect into magnificent poetry of the very first order deserves to be celebrated as one of the noblest triumphs of the human mind!

XLIII.

NATIVITY ODE (1629)

In 1629, Milton seems to have conceived the idea of writing a series of poems on the different festivals of the ecclesiastical year. This ambitious plan may originally have been formed in connection with the Nativity, a favourite subject with Renaissance painters, who were attracted to it partly by the splendid opportunities it affords for treating the contrast between great masses of light and shade. Milton's *Nativity Ode* was composed, upon his own confession, "shortly before sunrise" on Christmas Day (see ch. XXXII, above). This may be true of the original conception; but the poem as a whole is a far too artificially constructed piece of literature to have been the result of but a brief effort, however intense.

The Ode is remarkable for its numerous allusions to various effects of light and shade. In this respect, it is well illustrated by the following sentences taken from Sachs's treatise: "He (i. e. the author himself) distinctly remembers that from childhood he

and his sister likewise delighted in watching any kind of fire-display, especially in the night-time, such as illuminations, fire-works, conflagrations, flashing meteors, the furnaces of smiths, smelters, and glass-makers, and that they took great pleasure in contemplating the splendour of the moon, and of the rising and the setting sun" (§ 137).

XLIV.

THE PRINCIPAL REFERENCES TO PHENOMENA OF LIGHT AND SHADE

The second stanza of the Introduction contrasts the "light unsufferable" (a truly albinotic conception!), the "far-beaming blaze of majesty", and the "ever-lasting day" with the "darksome house of clay".

In the third stanza, express mention is made of the kind of illumination prevailing, and which is to remain the same throughout the poem:

Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright.
(ll. 19 ff.)

The first stanza of the Hymn proper contains the statement that the season is winter, the one most agreeable to albinos, and that the sun is now weaker than at any other time of the year.

In the second stanza, the peculiar effect of snow is referred to. Compare on this detail Sachs's account: "Especially in the morning and evening they (i. e. the two albinos) like to walk about, particularly where the light is mixed with shades. And things are not different in winter, although the soil is then covered with snow. Indeed, when the latter is illuminated by the rising or setting sun, it presents to them a most agreeable spectacle" (§ 139).

In the fifth stanza, Christ is called "the Prince of Light"; in the sixth, the stars are spoken of at great length. In the seventh stanza, a description of the morning-twilight is given, and the latter is said to be prolonged, on that occasion, beyond its customary duration, a fancy which owes its origin to the ardent desire of the author that it might be so:

And, though the shady gloom
 Had given day her room,
 The Sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
 And hid his head for shame,
 As his inferior flame
 The new-enlightened world no more should need:
 He saw a greater Sun appear
 Than his bright throne or burning axletree could bear.

The eleventh stanza describes the central effect of the poem:

At last surrounds their sight
 A globe of circular light,
 That with long beams the shamefaced Night arrayed;
 The helmèd cherubim
 And sworded seraphim
 Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,
 Harping in loud and solemn quire,
 With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Stanzas fourteen and fifteen speak of the dark cave of Hell which will "leave its dolorous mansions to the peering day"; of the "rainbow glories"; of "celestial sheen"; and of "radiant feet".

Stanza seventeen describes an event on Mount Sinai, where the "red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake".

XLV.

THE DIM LIGHT OF TEMPLES

The reference to oracles in stanza nineteen implies the idea of the interior of massy buildings: compare expressions such as "archèd roof", "shrine", etc. The intercourse between the "pale-eyed priest" (what a strange conception!) and his god takes place in "nightly trance".

The twentieth stanza is full of allusions to shady places: "haunted spring and dale, Edged with poplar pale"; "twilight shade"; etc.

The darkness of night, and the dimness of temples pervade stanzas twenty-one to twenty-four. One reads of the "holý shine of tapers"; of the "blue furnace"; of the "shroud of profoundest Hell"; of "dark anthems"; of "sable-stolèd sorcerers".

XLVI.

THE CONCLUDING STANZAS

The two concluding stanzas are simply crammed with references to agreeable effects of light and colour, and thus they emphasize the general character of the poem. In the text printed below, the words in point have been italicized:

So, when the *sun* in bed,
Curtained with cloudy red,
 Pillows his chin upon an *orient* wave,
 The flocking *shadows pale*
 Troop to the *infernal jail,*
 Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave,
 And the *yellow-skirted* fays
 Fly after the *night-steeds*, leaving their *moon-loved maze.*
 But see! the Virgin blest
 Hath laid her Babe to rest.
 Time is our tedious song should here have ending:
 Heaven's youngest-teemèd *star*
 Hath fixed her *polished* car,
 Her sleeping Lord with handmaid *lamp* attending;
 And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harnessed Angels sit in order serviceable.

The conceit of the "sun in bed" is a highly peculiar one, and has been subjected to much adverse criticism. Warton says of it: "The words *pillows* and *chin* throw an air of burlesque and familiarity over a comparison most exquisitely conceived and adapted" (p. 185). The present writer ventures to suggest that the words "bed, pillows, curtain" were very "familiar" words indeed with Milton, being, in fact, "emotional" in character. In bed, and behind the curtain, he would be safe from the glaring daylight. This may be demonstrated by the statistical method. In his English poetical works written before his blindness (leaving those on Hobson out of account) the word "bed" occurs 16 times; after his blindness, only 4 times. And this in spite of the fact that the works of the first period contain only 46,399 words as against 78,603 of the second. On the basis of an equal number of words, the second period ought to yield 27 instances instead of the actual 4! This remarkable state of

things seems to prove, that the word "bed" was an emotional one during Milton's photophobic period only. It is interesting to note that the plural (i. e. "beds"), which is of a greater emotional value than the singular, occurs 4 times in the first period, but not once in the second.

XLVII.

L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO (1634)

L'Allegro and *Il Penseroso* are often spoken of as "the Companion Poems" which should be read together. Many conjectures are on record as to their meaning. It has been suggested, e. g., that the *Allegro* stands for the gay Diodati, and that the *Penseroso* represents the puritanical Milton. The most generally accepted interpretation, however, seems to be the one delineated by Masson in the Globe Edition of Milton's Poems (pp. 409 f.), and which is to the effect that the companion pieces represent two moods of one and the same youth, set forth with studied antithesis. In a former publication, the present writer proposed the theory that *Il Penseroso* gave a systematic description of Milton's photophobia and nyctalopia (see *Milton und das Licht*, Halle 1920); that this remarkable poem expounded, as it were, the natural history of albinism as far as the process of seeing was concerned. *L'Allegro*, on the other hand, was declared to be nothing but a deliberately planned contrast to the former poem; that it was a mere "tour de force", written to prevent readers from concentrating their attention on *Il Penseroso*, and identifying its author with that melancholy and photophobic youth.

This very precarious explanation must now be abandoned as based on insufficient knowledge. The correct explanation may be discovered in the pages of Sachs's treatise. From the latter's account of the nature of the albinotic sight it becomes evident that both *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, apart from their unquestionable artistic merits, are but expositions of two different aspects of albinotic vision.

XLVIII.

"ALBINOS ARE FRIENDS OF LIGHT"

In the beginning of his chapter dealing with the "General Aspects of the Nature of the Eyes with regard to Light and

Darkness", Sachs says: "The eyes of which I treat are unusually sensitive to light". They are, however, not quite so bad as those of the albinos found in the interior of Africa and on the American Isthmus who are "almost completely nyctalopian, and are said to come out of their dark dwelling-places and caves only at night" (§ 131). However, this difference may be due not to a difference in the nature of the eyes, but rather to the fact that the light is generally much stronger in the tropics than in the countries of the temperate zone.

Sachs goes on to explain: "The unaccustomed sensation of light is, however, not always troublesome, as is commonly believed. It is true that there proceed from it various irritations, the brighter the light is that strikes the eyes. But just because of this same sensitivity many pleasures which men owe to the sense of sight are certainly enjoyed by these two albinos more than by most other mortals. May the readers understand . . . that these two, within certain limits, are truly Friends of Light. However, this photophilia does not go so far as to make them love light more than darkness under all conditions and without restriction" (§ 135).

XLIX.

DIES SUBNUBILUS

Certain kinds of light are unbearable to albinos. "They altogether dislike and fly from the brighter light, especially when it falls into the eyes from different directions". Such light will produce an unpleasant feeling in the fore part of the brain, if the eyes are exposed to it for any length of time (§ 136). "In the middle of the day, when the sun is high, they like less to go out than other men, unless it be into shady places. . . If, however, there are added to these conditions white clouds covering the whole sky, or the larger part of it, and the sun itself, so that the latter's rays wind their way through them as through a veil, their eyes are troubled by the light reflected into them from all sides in an almost unbearable manner" (§ 138).

In other places, Sachs speaks of days marked by the kind of illumination just described as "dies subnubili", overcast days. They are the unpleasant days, and as in England the overcast days are by far in the majority, this kind of illumination would

be treated by Milton as the normal "daylight", which is thus decidedly unpleasant to him.

L.

DIES SERENUS

Sachs goes on to explain: "Apart from what was said above (§ 138), it must be stated that the brightness of a very cloudless day (*dies serenus*) is not only not troublesome but even pleasant to our albinos, as long as by sufficiently closing their eyelids they are able to moderate its strength. For on such days the light is clearer, the shade darker, the intensity and differentiation of colours is greater to a quite extraordinary extent — and all this contributes to the seeing distinctly and pleasantly in these albinos much more than in most others" (§ 139).

This is the kind of illumination which Sachs observes on cloudless days. The sensations experienced on such serene days, of rare occurrence in England, form the central fact of the famous *Allegro*, and are referred to in the *Seventh Elegy* (see ch. XL, above).

LI.

DIES NUBILUS

These serene days are few and far-between, especially in England. "If one abstracts from a sky of beautiful blue, and from the distinctive variety of light and perfect shade, and from the pleasant and vigorous multiplicity of colours, flooded by an uncovered sun as far as eye can see, these albinos love all Carinthia (their native province) to be steeped in twilight rather than in clear light" (§ 140).

This is evidently the kind of half-light which corresponds to *Il Penseroso*, though Milton does not speak of it as a form of daylight, as his experience of "*dies plane nubili*" may have been but limited. "With the exception of the days plainly serene, those plainly clouded please Sachs best among the rest. For they possess a beauty altogether different from the beauty of the former which cannot very well be described in words. For the eyes are less pleased by colours under a misty sky, because they are weaker and less distinct, nor by shades which are slight and ill-defined; but they are less offended by the light

or the brilliance of the colours, and can look about with their eyelids wider open. . . The soul is rather quiet and restful, than bright and lively, and more than on clear days it is enclined to melancholy if occasion be given" (§ 140). These words plainly mark the contrast between the two Companion Poems!

LII.

PLAN OF THE COMPANION POEMS

Thus *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* represent two different and opposed, but pleasant, kinds of illumination with their respective moods: the former gay and lively, the latter quiet and serious. In the sequence of the events related they do not reproduce actual experience, but the plot is so constructed as to enable the author to display the peculiarities of his eyesight systematically. The overcast days (*dies subnubili*), which are the majority in England, standing between the two extremes, (*dies serenus* and *dies nubilus*), are wholly unpleasant, and therefore excluded from treatment by Milton. "Those cloudy days", Sachs explains, "when the sun is without its complete and bright splendour, and is neither altogether hidden by clouds, lack not only the pleasant excitement of bright days (*dies sereni*, producing the *Allegro* mood), as well as the grateful quiet of the wholly clouded ones (*dies nubili*, producing the *Penseroso* mood), but they generally are rather disagreeable . . . because of the whitish colour of the sky and the peculiar diffuse illumination of the terrestrial objects" (§ 141). On such days, Sachs often screens his windows to exclude the offensive light (§ 141). It is this kind of illumination, so prevalent in England, from which Milton tried to escape when, in imagination, he retired into the pleasant regions of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. To him, too, art was to grant that which reality denied him.

LIII.

IL PENSEROSO

In the present discussion, *Il Penseroso* must be placed first of the two Companion Poems. The mood portrayed, that intense but serene melancholy, is described with such consummate skill and force of conviction, that this poem has become a real power in

English literature, especially in that of the eighteenth century. *Il Penseroso* contains a systematic description of all the twilight kinds of illumination agreeable to the albino, in opposition to the disagreeable light of overcast days which are the rule in the English climate, and which torment the unprotected eye by their diffuse rays of sunlight.

LIV.

EXORDIUM

The poem opens with the banning of the "vain deluding joys", the companions of the *Allegro* mood. The latter can be enjoyed but rarely, and in order to conceal his disappointment, Milton calls them by this depreciatory name. He next addresses himself to the goddess Melancholy. She is the poet's favourite goddess, and therefore clad in black "of darkest grain". Even her face is "o'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue," because it is "too bright to hit the sense of human sight" — a most extraordinary conception, quite in keeping with its inventor's photophobia, and which serves to exonerate him from the charge of being a lover of darkness. In the lines that follow, the poet perfectly revels in references to pleasant forms of light; compare, e. g., the "glimmering bowers and glades", the "secret shades of woody Ida's inmost grove".

LV.

HESPERUS

The goddess Melancholy is to bring with her

. . . first and chiefest . . .

Him that yon soars on golden wing,

Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,

The Cherub Contemplation . . .

(ll. 51 ff.)

The "golden soaring guide" evidently is the evening-star, which is represented as leading in the fiery wheel of the rising moon. The colour of the moon is accurately observed; it has not yet changed its original bright yellow or orange colour, which it has on rising above the horizon, into the later silvery white by which it is chiefly known. The evening-star, Hesperus, is one of Milton's favourite conceptions; he is the harbinger of

pleasant hours, and celebrated as such again and again. Hesperus is a figure mentioned in two out of the four preliminary sketches of *Paradise Lost*. Compare also *Paradise Lost* IV. l. 605; IX. ll. 48 ff., treated in chapters LXXXIV and LXXXII, below; see also ch. XXXVI, above.

LVI.

LUNA

The moon is mentioned on two more occasions: it is introduced as Cynthia's car standing still over "the accustomed oak", and again as "riding near her highest noon" (ll. 59,67). Milton, thus, takes a great interest in its movements and watches it almost anxiously as it travels across the sky. Albinos love the moon; its light is extremely grateful to their eyes. Sachs reports that his parents told him that "when still of tender age, he used to contemplate the full moon with great attention and conspicuous delight" (§ 137). And again: "The moon, provided she be pure and clear, pleases both albinos marvellously well, and they love very much to walk about in her light, especially when she is full. They love to see the light of the moon, like that of the sun, to be set off by shades everywhere. This light makes the brother's mind tranquil, and often even joyful and lively" (§ 145). It is highly significant that Sachs too is thus seen to associate typical moods with corresponding modes of illumination.

LVII.

THE "GLOWING EMBERS" — THE "LAMP"

Clear moon-lit nights are rare in the English climate; hence Milton speaks of the moon less frequently than one might expect had he lived in a country enjoying brighter skies. When the weather is inclement, the poet is pleased with the "twilight" illumination produced by the logs burning in the fireplace (l. 79). Or he may choose to study by the light of a lamp (l. 85); for albinos "love artificial light, less, it is true, than natural light, but they are not displeased with it, unless it is too strong" (Sachs, § 146). By "natural light" Sachs, of course, does not mean "any kind of such light" but only those kinds which are agreeable. He expressly states that he likes the light produced

by kitchen fires, burning, no doubt, on an open hearth in his case (§ 137).

LVIII.

“THE STARRY HOST”

Milton's numerous allusions to astronomy, of which the reference to the “Bear” (l. 87) is an instance, are in keeping with what is known about the peculiarities of the albinotic vision. The night sky is one of the few aspects of nature which albinos may contemplate with impunity. Sachs states that he but very rarely succeeded in seeing a star in broad daylight without a glass. To him the stars emerged from the setting sun later, and they disappeared before the rising sun or moon sooner than to other men (§ 214). Compare with this statement the famous passage in *Paradise Lost* contained in the ten lines which were originally intended for the opening of a tragedy (see ch. LXXVII. below), and which take the form of an apostrophe to the sun:

O thou that, with surpassing glory crowned,
Look'st from thy sole dominion like the god
Of this new World — at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminished heads — . . . (*Paradise Lost* IV. ll. 32 ff.)

In very dark nights, Sachs could see, with a clear sky, stars of the sixth and seventh magnitudes, whereas others, standing by, could hardly recognize those of the fourth magnitude (§ 214). Bright objects are perceived by albinos the more distinctly the darker their background.

LIX.

“NIGHT'S PALE CAREER”

Owing to his dependence on the conditions of illumination, “Night's pale career” (l. 121) is the favourite time of the poet. He likes best to spend its hours in reading by the light of candle or lamp. On the effect of night on his mind Sachs makes the following statement: “The soul of the brother (i. e. himself) is generally more lively and fitter for sensations in the night than in the daytime; not only in obscurity, but also when the latter yields to artificial light; nor in the silence of night, nor in nocturnal solitude only; but also in the most crowded assembly, and in the splendour and noise of the most brilliant festivities”

(§ 148). In this passage, Sachs once more contrasts the two moods as dependent on illumination: The pleasant, but *weak* artificial light conducive to pensiveness, and the *strong* artificial light of "brilliant festivities", producing the joyous excitement described in the latter part of *L'Allegro*.

LX.

HELIOPHOBIA

Milton's attitude towards the sun is such as to make him suspected of albinism almost more than anything else. When, at last, morning must come, Milton, under the disguise of the *Penseroso*, wishes it to be "civil-suited", i. e. dressed in sober, not in brilliant, clothes. "Not tricked and frounced" morning is to come, for he dislikes those overcast days, when the rays of the sun attack his eyes like darts from all directions. He prefers a clouded dawn, the sun wearing a "comely cloud" for a kerchief, though this may imply "rocking winds", or a "still shower" (ll. 122—130). Sachs tells his readers that on serene days, which belong to the *Allegro* mood, and on overcast days, which are the rule in England, the best times for seeing are the hours preceding sunrise and those following sunset. "The midday hours are less convenient for clear seeing" (§ 218). The sun, however, will assert itself in the end. It will then be necessary to withdraw into a more congenial illumination:

And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves
Of pine, or monumental oak . . . (ll. 131 ff.)

The poet would like to retire into the densest part of a primeval forest:

There, in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look . . . (ll. 139 f.)

He would be hidden "from day's garish eye", by which he means the sun shining through a thin veil of clouds and thus producing that diffuse light so unpleasant to the albinotic eye. The hours of the most glaring illumination, i. e. of the dreaded noontide, he wishes to pass in sleeping (ll. 141 ff.).

LXI.

"THE HIGH EMBOWED ROOF"

So far, Milton has succeeded in enumerating all the agreeable *weak* or twilight kinds of illumination but one: he has omitted to speak of the dim and grateful light to be enjoyed in large buildings, caves, etc. These places are loved by Sachs, too, and the latter reports that he is fond of roaming about "in spacious and dark buildings, e. g. churches, in obscure woods, among rocks, and in caves" (§ 140). From boyhood, he loved to visit, even on serene days, remote places in woods, narrow mountain passes, and caves among rocks, as well as other localities generally steeped in twilight; not only to escape from some unpleasant light, but to yield himself there to the dreaming of love, poetry, and other subjects (§ 139). Milton also mentions dense woods, but does not speak of caves and rocks, although the latter play an important part in other poetical works belonging to the period of photophobia; they are too far removed from his actual experience to be admitted into the strictly auto-biographical Companion Poems. But Milton cannot refrain from indulging in a reference to that peculiar and highly agreeable twilight illumination which was always available in churches with their stained glass windows. Abruptly, he begins to speak of the "studious cloister's pale", of the "high-embowèd roof", of the massive masonry, and of the "storied windows richly dight, Casting a dim religious light" (ll. 156 ff). There is here no connection with the plot which is based on the chronological sequence of the events related; but Milton felt that he must speak of this the most agreeable phenomenon of all, even at the risk of violating the artistic arrangement of his most personal poem!

LXII.

"THE PEALING ORGAN"

It is in the mystic twilight of the church that the poet experiences a moment of ecstatic rapture which makes him forget his sufferings more than anything else was able to do. But it is not the agreeable illumination that actually induces his trance; such illumination is only a necessary concomitant. The ecstatic fit itself is produced by the influence of music. Albinos are

extremely short-sighted, as was pointed out on several occasions, and the few objects they do see they perceive but imperfectly. The mind cannot, however, remain empty. Therefore, Milton developed his acoustic sense beyond its normal limits. Many things and creatures he knows and describes by their sounds only: notice, in this connection, the references to the nightingale (l. 56), the curfew (l. 74), the "bellman's drowsy charm" (l. 83), the "piping winds" (l. 126), the "minute drops from off the eaves" (l. 130), the "singing bee" (l. 142), and the "sweet music" of the genius of the wood (l. 151). Music he loved, and sings its praises in several places. The combination of the grateful dimness with the soul-stirring anthem sung to the accompaniment of the "pealing organ" (l. 161) procured for the poet those rare moments of extreme bliss for which his tortured soul was constantly yearning:

But let my due feet never fail
 To walk the studious cloister's pale,
 And love the high-embow'd roof,
 With antique pillars massy-proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light.
 There let the pealing organ blow,
 To the full-voiced quire below
 In service high and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into ecstasies,
 And bring all Heaven before mine eyes. (ll. 155 ff.)

LXIII.

L'ALLEGRO

This poem describes the joyful mood produced in the albino by a brightness which is not disagreeable. Its central fact is the description of one of those rare days which are perfectly cloudless — dies sereni — whose nature has been discussed elsewhere (see ch. L, above). *L'Allegro* begins with an invocation of Euphrosyne, the personification of mirth. From her very origin she has been associated with the ideas of brightness and of splendour. She is the bringer of a pleasant mood: "For the albino performs most

mental and physical operations more cheerfully and with better success under a clear than under a cloudy sky" (Sachs, § 139). Mirth is accompanied by the "mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty" (l. 36), i. e., the peculiar and agreeable light of the serene day allows the poet to walk about unmolested in the open — "not unseen, By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green" (ll. 57 f.) — without having to be constantly casting about for shade-yielding objects. The effect of bright, unclouded sunshine is described by Sachs in almost extravagant terms. "When the sun first breaks through the clouds clear and bright", he says, "everything is quickly changed. Then, unless prevented by special reasons, the windows of heaven are opened. Both body and soul are filled with a sensation of pleasure in such a sudden and wonderful manner, that one would hardly believe that light could produce such a result by merely affecting the eyes" (§ 142).

LXIV. SUNRISE

The Allegro is awakened by the lark to enjoy the pleasures of the Dawn and Sunrise (l. 41). Milton dwells at great length upon the description of the various sounds which strike the ear on such occasions. It is again the extraordinary short-sightedness of the albino which must be referred to to account for this peculiarity. His mind, craving for contact with the outside world, eagerly seizes upon whatever acoustic impressions are presented to it. Thus Milton is guided in his description by his sense of hearing rather than by his visual powers: he mentions the lark (l. 41), the cock (l. 49), the hounds and horn (l. 53), the echo (l. 56), the whistling ploughman (l. 63), the singing milkmaid (l. 65), the mower whetting his scythe (l. 66), and the shepherd counting his flock (l. 67).

Milton revels in the splendours of the morning sky. The "day-star" (*Lycidas*, l. 168) has not yet assumed his forbidding noontide aspect. The poet delights in being able to confront the sun fearlessly by walking

Right against the eastern gate
Where the great Sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight . . . (ll. 59 ff.)

Milton's love of the sunrise, displayed in this as well as in many other instances, is fully accounted for by what Sachs says about the same subject in that highly emotional passage quoted in chapter XXXVI, above.

LXV.

THE EXCESSIVE BRIGHTNESS OF NOON

Even on serene days, the midday hours are less convenient for clear seeing (cp. Sachs, § 218). The grateful hours of sunrise over, the poet's mind again turns to the conception of shade and twilight. He places his shepherd "under the hawthorn in the dale" (l. 68), and clothes the landscape in sombre colours, in "russet" and "grey" (l. 71). He has visions of "labouring clouds" (l. 74), and he sees towers and battlements, "boomed high in tufted trees" (l. 77). Even the cottage is shaded by "two aged oaks" (l. 82), and the smoke rising from its chimney adds a further element of shade and obscurity (l. 81). The poet apparently does not accompany the rural workers into the corn-field or the meadow, but stays behind in the "bower" (ll. 87—90).

LXVI.

"SECURE DELIGHT"

It is in the following brief passage of nine lines only that the poet unmistakably ventures out into the open on a truly bright summer's day:

Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebocks sound
To many a youth and many a maid
Dancing in the chequered shade,
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the live-long daylight fail . . . (ll. 91—99)

"Sometimes" it is possible for him to come out into the open without fear; the peculiar weather conditions — *dies serenus* — offer him a "secure delight", to be enjoyed in the "uplands". The "hill, mount", or "mountain" is, in Milton's imagination, associated

with the idea of brightness; thus, e. g., he contrasts, in *Paradise Lost*, the "sunny hill" with the "shady grove" (III. 28). On such a "sunshine holiday" he may come forth with young and old, to play "till the live-long daylight fail". But even on such exceptional days, Milton prefers the hours immediately preceding sunset, and it is again certain acoustic factors, and not so much visual ones (bells, rebecks), which attract his attention in spite of the favourable illumination.

The evident delight taken by Milton in the "chequered shade" with its sharply marked contrasts finds a parallel in Sachs's description of the pleasures of vision on clear sunlit days. In view of the importance of the passage, it will be quoted once more: "For on such days, the light is clearer, the shade darker, the intensity and differenciation of colours is greater to a quite extraordinary extent; and all this contributes in these men much more to seeing distinctly and pleasantly than in most others" (§ 139; cp. ch. XXXVI, above).

LXVII.

TWILIGHT AND FIRESIDE

The spell of daylight supplies matter for fifty-eight lines only (ll. 41—98). It was but on rare occasions that Milton could move about in the sunshine without serious molestation. In the passages that follow he turns to less exceptional cases of agreeable illumination. He first speaks of the tales concerning fairies and goblins told in the evening twilight. These tales are themselves crammed with photophobic allusions (ll. 100—114). They tell of the nightly doings of those mythological figures, all of whom end their activities before daybreak. It is the social and exhilarating element implied in these proceedings that connects them with the general character of the Allegro mood.

LXVIII.

THE SPLENDOUR OF FESTIVITIES

The Allegro mood is, however, more decidedly created by a brilliant artificial illumination. This is the place to recall Sachs's words on this subject. His "soul was more lively and more fit for sensations in the night than in the daytime; not

only in the silence of night, and in solitude, but also in the most crowded assembly, and in the splendour and noise of the most brilliant festivities" (§ 148; cp. ch. LIX above). Milton refers at some length to evening entertainments to be enjoyed in the refined aristocratic society of the capital:

Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit or arms, while both contend
To win her grace whom all commend. (ll. 117—124)

In the first line of the above quotation, the last word is repeated from a previous line:

Then to the spicy nut-brown ale . . . (l. 100)

Its meaning is: "in the evening, at night." By "triumphs" he means the shows, revels, and masques of the aristocracy. In what follows, the taper indicates that the scene was illuminated by artificial light:

There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With masque and ancient pageantry . . . (ll. 125—128)

Milton's description of such events cannot very well be based on real experience. Assisted by descriptions of festivities at the court of the Russian emperor (see the present writer's *Studies concerning the Origin of Paradise Lost*, Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Dorpatensis, Humaniora 1924, No LXXI), he seems to have elaborated his reminiscences of much humbler festivities into

Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream. (ll. 129 f.)

LXIX.

AT THE THEATRE

The theatre was more within the reach of a man of his class, and it is there that he liked to spend part of the evening.

It has been pointed out already that Milton must have patronized the so-called "Private Theatres" at which the performances took place by artificial light (cp. ch. XXXI, above). This view is fully confirmed by the position of the lines containing the reference to the theatre:

Then to the well-trod stage anon . . . (l. 131)

"Then" again means "in the evening, at night", as above. Theatres and assembly halls are specially named by Sachs as places where albinos can spend the evening without experiencing any eye-troubles (§ 146; cp. ch. LVII, above).

LXX.

ARCADES (1634) — ITS NYCTALOPIAN CHARACTER

Arcades is a dramatic fragment of which the scene is laid in a park after sunset. It opens with a reference to one of those light-effects which albinos love:

Look, Nymphs and Shepherds, look!

What sudden blaze of majesty

Is that which we from hence descry . . . (ll. 1 ff.)

By assuming the character of the "Genius of the Wood", Milton contrived to display his nyctalopia in the most typical manner possible. The "Genius of the Wood" with his nocturnal habits thus strongly reminds in his conception of the description of the albinos in certain tropical countries as "*homines sylvestres et nocturni*". In the beginning of his speech, the Genius provides the inevitable allusion to the kind of illumination then prevailing: it is night (l. 39); and the effect of this statement is increased by the description of the scene of action contained in the Second Song:

Under the shady roof

Of branching elm star-proof . . . (ll. 88 f.)

The Genius informs the audience that he lives "in oaken bower" (l. 45), i. e. in the densest part of the forest. Milton loved to imagine himself in a similar position. He makes the Genius walk about in the evening and in the morning twilight, and thus furnishes the most perfect example of nyctalopia imaginable:

When evening grey doth rise, I fetch my round

Over the mount, and all this hallowed ground;

And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tasselled horn
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about... (ll. 54 ff.)

LXXI.

THE HARMONY OF THE SPHERES

In the darkest hours of the night, the Genius does not wish to sleep. There is no excess of light to trouble him. He may contemplate the starry firmament. But its mere sight is not sufficient to absorb all his mental faculties. It is the acoustic sense, once more, which he calls in aid. Seizing upon the sublime notion of the Harmony of the Spheres, Milton exclaims:

But else, in deep of night, when drowsiness
Hath locked up mortal sense, then listen I
To the celestial Sirens' harmony,
That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
And sing to those that hold the vital shears,
And turn the adamantine spindle round
On which the fate of gods and men is wound.
Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie... (ll. 61 ff.)

LXXII.

COMUS (1634): A TYPICAL NIGHT-PIECE

Like *Arcades*, *Comus* is a typical night-piece. The greater part of the action takes place in the "double night of darkness and of shades" (l. 335). The scene, according to the stage-direction, is a "wild wood". In it, Comus lives, "in thick shelter of black shades imbowered" (l. 62). One may, thus, conclude that the figure of this demon, too, represents Milton, or at least one aspect of his personality. The Attendant Spirit in his prologue endeavours with all his might to emphasize the contrast between the celestial regions from which he comes, and the "smoke and stir of this dim spot" (l. 5).

LXXIII.

THE FOLDING STAR — PRAISE OF NIGHT

At the beginning of the action, Comus pronounces that typical and famous address to the Evening Star which

clearly indicates the time of day and the kind of illumination prevailing:

The star that bids the shepherd fold
Now the top of heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream:
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east.

(ll. 93 ff.)

The Evening Star is the harbinger of happy hours (cp. ch. LV, above):

Meanwhile, welcome joy and feast . . . (l. 102)

Comus, by referring to the movements of the sun during the night, clearly demonstrates — as by many other clear indications throughout the rest of the play — that the question of the sun's whereabouts is constantly occupying the mind of the author. Milton is putting his own words into the mouth of Comus when he makes the latter proclaim, in fervent language, which sounds perfectly genuine and convincing, the merits of night as compared with day. It must have afforded a most welcome relief to the poet to be able to praise night under the assumed character of a dramatic figure. It is with exceptional poetic vigour that he sings the praises of night, the bringer of comfort after the tortures of day:

What hath night to do with sleep? (l. 122)

he exclaimed; and in doing so, he was probably thinking of all those who despised and suspected him because of his aversion to daylight and his love of darkness; and of those who objected to his nocturnal habits.

LXXIV.

ENDING BEFORE DAYBREAK

The play ends in characteristic fashion. Before the break of day, the action must be over, and all must have left the stage. The Spirit exclaims:

Come let us haste; the stars grow high,
And Night sits monarch yet in the mid sky. (ll. 956 f.)

When the dance is over, the Spirit prepares to depart. And as in the beginning, he again emphasizes his sense of the prevailing darkness by an elaborate reference to the brightness of those happy climes that lie

Where day never shuts his eye . . . (l. 977)

Where eternal summer dwells . . . (l. 988)

but where Milton did not venture to penetrate.

LXXV.

LYCIDAS (1637)

This poem is but a string of beautiful conceptions unrestrained by any logical purpose, and rising from its author's subconsciousness. One notion suggests the other by mere association. There is no plot in the full sense of the word. Yet the poem is dramatically conceived in a certain sense. The poet represents it as having been composed by an "uncouth swain", (l. 186) who is to be identified with the author himself, and who is shown to the reader only in the morning and evening twilight. Noon, with its greatest intensity of illumination, is passed over in silence;

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals grey:
 He touched the tender stops of various quills,
 With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay... (ll. 186 ff.)

Lycidas abounds in specimens of Milton's photophobic tendencies. There is, e. g., his description of how he spent the day at Cambridge, or wished to have spent it (cp. ch. XXXII, above):

Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
 Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,
 We drove a-field, and both together heard
 What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn,
 Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
 Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
 Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
(ll. 25 ff.)

In the pastoral style here adopted, "to tend one's flock" means "to study, to compose poetry". Milton wishes to say that they, i. e. the poet himself and his friend, were especially fond of the early morning hours, and of the time from sunset till after midnight: the evening star is watched from its rise till after it has passed its zenith. The hours of noon are quickly passed over, and characterized by the adjective "drowsy", i. e. provoking sleepiness: Milton loved to spend them sleeping after the fashion of the *Penseroso* (see ch. LX, above). It is, however, hardly to be assumed that Milton's friend actually did share the peculiar habits of the poet as the latter pretends.

LXXVI.

EPITAPHIUM DAMONIS (1640)

In this monody, Milton introduces himself under the assumed character of the shepherd-poet Thyrsis. Here again, as in *Lycidas*, the plot is extremely slight. Thyrsis is bewailing the death of his friend; what references there are to the scene of action all exhibit photophobic features, as is proved by the following list:

He made the *woods* and *hollow rocks* resound,
Young Damon dead; nor even ceased to pour
His lonely sorrow at the *midnight* hour.

(Cowper's translation, ll. 8 ff.)

And when the shepherd had resumed his seat
At the *elm's* root, within his own *retreat* . . . (ib. ll. 19 f.)
Where *glens* and *vales* are *thickest overgrown*
With *tangled boughs*, I wander now alone,
Till *night* descend . . . (ll. 81 ff.)

Aegon invites me to the *hazel grove*,
Amyntas, on the river's bank to rove,
And young Alpheſiboëus to a seat
Where *branching elms* exclude the *mid-day* heat. (ll. 95 ff.)

LXXVII.

THE PHOTOPHOBIC PARTS OF PARADISE LOST:
BOOKS IV, IX & I, II

An examination of Milton's Prose Works will show that after the first attack of glaucoma in 1644/45, the signs of photo-

phobia begin to disappear from his literary productions. It seems, therefore, reasonable to assume that those parts of *Paradise Lost* which exhibit strong photophobic features must have been composed before that most important year. These parts are: Book IV and the first part of book IX; and books I and II. Books IV and IX contain a continuous story, viz. that of the Temptation and Fall of Man. This subject was originally intended for treatment in dramatic form. The famous ten lines in the beginning of book IV (ll. 32—41) are said, by Edward Phillips, Milton's nephew, to have been "designed for the very beginning of the said tragedy". How much of the other speeches that form part of the rest of book IV was derived from the dramatic fragment which must be assumed to have existed, it is impossible to find out by means of the methods employed here.

As to books I and II, they seem to have been both planned and composed in epic form from the beginning. It was Milton's Italian journey that apparently created in him the intention to write an epic poem in the style of certain recent Italian poets, such as Ariosto and Tasso. Milton at first thought of the legendary figure of Brutus, founder of the British nation (cp. *Epitaphium Damonis*, ll. 161—178), and of King Arthur (cp. *Mansus*, ll. 80—84) as suitable subjects. But this plan had to be abandoned because it was found impossible to frame the plot so as to allow the author to remain in a suitable illumination all the time. In the end, Milton returned to the story of Satan, which he had already treated in his Latin poem on the Fifth of November (see ch. XXXVIII, above), and to which the story of the demon Comus bears great affinity.

The drama on the Temptation and Fall, of which books IV and IX may contain fragments, would thus present itself as a continuation of the impulse which caused the creation of *Comus*, and which was derived from the Elizabethan drama. The idea to write an epic was of foreign origin, as pointed out above.

The results of Milton's inquiries into the early history of Britain in search of a plot may be discovered in his prose work *The History of Britain* (1670). In the very beginning of the first book, traces of an attempt to construct a "photophobic" plot may be recognized in the following items, which appear to have been elaborated with especial care:

First therefore having fortified those castles, he (i. e. Brutus) with Assaracus and the whole multitude betake them *to the Woods* and hills . . .

Brutus . . . *over night* planting himself there . . .

Brutus . . . returns to the residue of his friends *in the thick woods* . . .

Brutus . . . enjoins him, that he should go *at the second hour of the night* to the Greekish leagre, and tell the guards he had brought Antigonus by stealth out of prison *to a certain woody vale* . . .

. . . huge havock begins upon *the sleeping* and unguarded *enemy* . . .

Day appearing, he enters the town . . . and leaving the place better fortified, returns with the king his prisoner *to the woods* . . .

(Fletcher's edition of the *Prose Works*, p. 477).

Note. The theories proposed here in connection with the origin of *Paradise Lost* are treated with more detail in the present writer's essays *Milton's Eyesight and the Chronology of his Works* in *Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Dorpatensis, Humaniora* 1924, and *Studies concerning the Origin of Paradise Lost*, ib. — Further criteria pointing to the same conclusion will be presented in a special publication.

LXXVIII.

THE CHARACTER OF SATAN

Satan seems to have been the only figure in whose treatment Milton believed to be able to display his photophobia without restraint, and to express, at the same time, his own sense of despair and his craving for self-assertion. Satan has been identified with Milton before, though on other grounds. An unnamed writer in the *Athenaeum* (July 1st, 1905, p. 8) says: "Satan is, we know, the hero of *Paradise Lost* — dauntless, self-contained, unmurmuring in defeat and fall. That we all can see; it is no less certain to the present reviewer, though pointed out less often, if at all, that in his intellectual might, his unbroken energy, his sedate and godlike patience, his calm dependence on himself amid overwhelming sorrows from without, the Titanic form of Satan is a mask through which we see the face and hear the speech of Milton's self". The Swedish scholar S. B. Liljegren speaks of Milton's Satan as created by a "congenial mind" (*Studies in Milton*, Lund 1918, p. XXXI).

Milton, however, identified himself with Satan only as long

as his photophobia lasted, i. e. until he lost his sight. In his much quoted introduction to the third book, he clearly refers to this change in his attitude:

Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born!
 Or of the Eternal coeternal beam
 May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,
 And never but in unapproachèd light
 Dwelt in eternity — dwelt then in thee,
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate!
 Or hear'st thou rather pure Ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the Sun,
 Before the Heavens, thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless Infinite!
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
 Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight,
 Through utter and through middle Darkness borne,
 With other notes than to the Orphean lyre
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
 Taught by the Heavenly Muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to re-ascend
 Though hard and rare . . . (III. ll. 1—21)

Now, the poet is blind, the light no longer causes him pain, and he can sing its praises. He may visit, i. e. come into, the light safe; but the light no longer visits his eyes:

. . . Thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn . . .
 (III. ll. 21 ff.)

From this moment, Satan, the "Prince of Darkness" (cp. *Paradise Lost*, X. l. 383; *Paradise Regained*, IV. l. 441; *niger umbrarum dominus*, *In Quintum Novembris*, l. 78), was abandoned for the figure of Christ, the "Prince of Light" (cp. *Nativity Ode*, l. 62), who was to become the principal figure of *Paradise Regained*. Further down in the third book he exclaims:

Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! Thy name
 Shall be the copious matter of my song
 Henceforth . . . (III. ll. 412 ff.)

The introduction to the third book thus clearly defines the boundary line dividing the period of photophobia from that of blindness.

LXXIX.

ANALYSIS OF BOOK IV

The action of book IV, as was pointed out above (ch. LXXVII), thus opens with Satan's apostrophe to the sun originally intended for the first scene of a tragedy. This passage contains an elementary outburst of Heliophobia; Satan is addressing the "Full blazing Sun" in the following terms:

O thou that, with surpassing glory crowned,
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the god
 Of this new World — at whose sight all the stars
 Hide their diminished heads — to thee I call,
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
 O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere,
 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
 Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King!
 (ll. 32 ff.)

After this speech, Satan journeys on to the confines of Paradise, which

. . . crowns with her enclosure green,
 As with a rural mound, the champain head
 Of a *steep wilderness*, whose *hairy sides*
 With *thicket overgrown*, *grotesque and wild*,
 Access denied; and overhead upgrew
Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
 A *sylvan scene*, and, as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
 Of stateliest view.

(ll. 133 ff.)

The description of the scenery of Paradise is thus seen to be decisively influenced by Milton's predilection for shade and

twilight. Satan is next discovered wandering up "that steep savage hill" (l. 172), "pensive and slow" (l. 173). The word "pensive" cannot fail to remind the reader of the *Penseroso*, that other typical representative of the poet. At last, Satan can proceed no further:

. . . so thick entwined,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed
 All path of man or beast that passed that way.
(ll. 174 ff.)

With a bold jump, Satan leaps the wall of Paradise. He discovers the First Couple "under a tuft of shade" (l. 325), eating their supper, which indicates that night is about to fall, and that the poet may move about freely. In the speech that follows, Satan contrasts his dark dwelling with "this fair Paradise", and he adds that it would not please the "sense" (viz. of sight) of men (ll. 387 ff).

In the night that follows, much "action" takes place in Paradise between Satan and the band of angels set to watch the happy garden and its inmates. Satan is apprehended by the militant angels. All this is dramatically told, and many of the speeches exchanged seem to be fragments of the original scheme. With the return of light, Satan, i. e. Milton, must leave the stage. These are the last words of the fourth book:

. . . The Fiend fled
 Murmuring; and with him fled the shades of Night.
(ll. 1013 ff.)

LXXX.

MILTON AND THE SUN

The exceptional position assigned to that most remarkable address to the sun is highly suggestive, and justifies the autobiographical interpretation of its contents. The sun, except on those rare "serene days", and during the brief hours of its rising and setting, is the albino's greatest enemy. When the rest of mankind are enjoying its health-giving light and warmth, he must ignominiously retire into the gloom. While Milton's heliophobia lasted, he used to watch the sun's movements most atten-

tively; for his well-being depended on its position. Dawn and Sunset which often produce a highly agreeable illumination are described again and again in the most glowing terms. He loved "the sweet approach of even and morn" (*Paradise Lost* III. l. 42) better than "the full-blazing sun", sitting "high in his meridian tower" (ib. IV. ll. 29 ff.). In his imagination, the beams of the sun assume a material body; Sachs, too, speaks of the "arrows of Phoebus" (§ 28). Compare the following passage containing a most effective alliteration:

And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams . . . (*Il Penseroso* ll. 131 f.)

Angels may travel along those beams in their journeys between heaven and earth; as in the passages subjoined:

Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star.
(*Paradise Lost* IV. ll. 555 f.)

. . . and Uriel to his charge
Returned on that bright beam, whose point now raised
Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fallen
Beneath the Azores. (ib. ll. 589 ff.)

LXXXI.

AVERSION TO THE SUN AFTER BLINDNESS

The sun attacks not only the eyes but also the skin of the albino. The Hindus are reported to know that albinotic children must wear clothes from the very first day of their lives (see E. Epstein, *Zeitschrift für Morphologie und Anthropologie*, XVII. p. 365). Prolonged exposure to the rays of the sun will produce skin troubles (see Sachs, § 28). Milton seems to refer to this fact in his Sixth Academic Oration, in which he explains why he does not take part in the outdoor games of his fellow students. He says that his hand is not hardened through holding the plough, nor has he ever been lying stretched out on his back in the midday sun like a seven-year-old cowherd (aut quia manus tenenda stiva non occaluit, aut quia nunquam ad meridianum solem supinus jacui septennis bubulcus, Fletcher's edition of the

Prose Works, p. 856a). The implication, veiled behind the artificial conceits of pastoral poetry, is that games are vulgar and childish and beneath the dignity of a grown-up rational being; by devoting himself exclusively to his studies he believes, or pretends to believe, to have established his superiority.

His dislike of the sun, therefore, must have outlived the reduction and loss of his sight. This is proved by a passage in the very beginning of the *Defence of the People of England* (1651), during the composition of which Milton became totally blind. This work is a retort to Salmasius' *Defence of the King* (i. e. Charles I). By frequent metaphorical allusions to "the sun", Salmasius had touched Milton's pride, whether intentionally or not, in its most vulnerable spot. To mention the sun in his presence amounted to insulting him personally. Trembling with emotion, he savagely replies: "Among the many difficulties that you find in expressing the heinousness of so incredible a piece of impiety (viz. the trial and execution of the king), this offers itself, you say, which is easily said, and must often be repeated; to wit, that the sun itself never beheld a more outrageous action. But by your good leave, Sir, the sun has beheld many things, that blind Bernard never saw. But we are content you should mention the sun over and over. And it will be a piece of prudence in you to do so. For though our wickedness does not require it, the coldness of the defence that you are making does. The original of kings, you say, is as ancient as that of the sun. May the gods and goddesses, Damasippus, bless thee with an everlasting solstice; that thou mayest always be warm, thou that canst not stir a foot without the sun. Perhaps you would avoid the imputation of being called a Doctor Umbraticus. But alas! you are in perfect darkness . . ." (Washington's translation as reprinted by Fletcher, p. 344a).

LXXXII.

ANALYSIS OF BOOK IX

The ninth book continues the story of the fourth. What may be conjectured to form the original part begins at line 48, lines 1—47 being a late addition linking up the text with the

long interpolation separating it from book IV. The opening contains the typical reference to the illumination prevailing:

*The sun was sunk, and after him the Star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the Earth, short arbiter
'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veiled the horizon round . . .*
(ll. 48 ff.)

Thus the conditions for action in the open are at once created. This book describes Satan's second visit to Paradise. He had been driven away by the angelic guard at the end of book IV:

*By night he fled, and at midnight returned
From compassing the Earth — cautious of day . . .
The space of seven continued nights he rode
With darkness . . .*
(ll. 58 ff.)

Book IX gives the story of the actual Temptation and Fall. As the story moves on, the photophobic character of the narrative gradually vanishes, but it would be difficult to say exactly where the dividing line is to be drawn.

LXXXIII.

ANALYSIS OF BOOKS I AND II

The first book, after introductory remarks of very late origin (ll. 1—49) — they probably were the very last lines to be written — the action begins at a most curious point. The rebellious angels have been cast into hell, where utter darkness prevails — although it is filled with fire!

*At once, as far as Angel's ken, he (i. e. Satan) views
The dismal situation waste and wild.
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades . . .*
(ll. 59—65)

The action of the two books is throughout placed in Hell and in Chaos, the twilight illumination of which is now and then interrupted by various kinds of light-effects. Chaos is on several occasions stated to be the home of "sable-vested Night, eldest of things" (II. l. 962).

LXXXIV.

THE APPROACH OF NIGHT

It is impossible to close the discussion of the photophobic parts of Milton's poetic works without reference having been made to that most remarkable passage in the fourth book of *Paradise Lost* descriptive of the coming of night, into which Milton put all the intensity of feeling of which his soul was capable, thus achieving an artistic effect of the very first order:

Now came still Evening on, and Twilight grey
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale.
She all night long her amorous descant sung:
Silence was pleased. Now glowed the firmament
With living sapphires; Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the Moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

(IV. ll. 598—609)

This is the passage about which Taine says: "The changes of illumination are here become a pious procession of vague beings who fill the soul with the spirit of veneration" (*Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise*).

LXXXV.

INFLUENCE OF MILTON'S PHOTOPHOBIA ON HIS CHOICE OF WORDS

It is comparatively easy to demonstrate that the peculiarities of Milton's eyesight have influenced him in his choice of words.

As regards his poems, an inquiry into this subject may be conducted with but slight trouble with the help of the existing Concordances. All the vast possibilities of this method cannot be exhausted in the present treatise, but only a few specimens can be given. The figures quoted below will prove that Milton in his First or Photophobic period preferred words calling up the pleasant associations of "darkness, twilight, shade" etc., whereas after the loss of his sight these conditions do no longer exist, and may even be reversed.

The number of words contained in the poems of the First Period (exclusive of the purely occasional poems on Hobson, and including the first and the second sonnet, as well as *Paradise Lost* IV, IX, I, II, except the introductory lines to I and IX) has been ascertained to be 46.399; that of the Second Period to be 78.663 (including the rest of *Paradise Lost*, but without the later sonnets). The absolute figures obtained from the Concordance for the two periods cannot, therefore, be compared, as their bases are different. In order to obtain figures that may be compared, it is necessary either to multiply those of the First Period by 1.7 (or more exactly 1.69), or to divide those of the Second Period by the same figure. In the following tables, the former method has been employed. — The figures presented in the following chapters are taken from John Bradshaw's *Concordance to the Poetical Works of John Milton*, London 1894. For a study of the figures obtained from the Latin poems see *Die Neueren Sprachen*, XXXIII (1925). pp. 147 ff.

	Absolute Figures for First Period	Figures of First Period multiplied by 1.7	Absolute Figures for Second Period
day	53.0	90.1	163.0
night	93.0	158.1	85.0
sun	40.0	68.0	57.0
moon	20.0	34.0	25.0
noon, midday, etc.	11.0	18.7	14.0
midnight	11.0	18.7	3.0
light	49.0	83.3	89.0
shade, shadow . .	53.0	90.1	52.0
cave, cavern, den, grot	18.0	30.6	9.0

In the above table, only columns 2 and 3 should be compared, attention being paid to relative rather than to absolute values. Thus, e. g., the "sun" is mentioned more frequently in the period of full vision than in that of blindness, as in only natural. The significant fact is, that the "moon" is mentioned exactly half as often as the "sun" in the first period, but less than half as often in the period of blindness.

The following series of figures illustrates Milton's preference for "East" and "West", the quarters of sunrise and sunset respectively; it is highly significant that the "North", in spite of the unpleasant associations connected with this region, should be better represented than the "South", the region of the noon-tide sun. These features are less prominent in the period of blindness. In the list given below, adjectives as well as compounds have been counted together with the main-words:

East	12.0	20.4	28.0
West	8.0	13.6	14.0
North	5.0	8.5	12.0
South	4.0	6.8	11.0

The contrast established by Milton between the "shady grove" and the "sunny hill" (cp. ch. LXVI, above) may be strikingly illustrated by means of figures culled from the Concordance:

grove	18.0	30.6	12.0
hill	27.0	45.9	57.0
mount,-ain . . .	15.0	25.2	44.0
(total)	42.0	71.1	101.0
dale	8.0	13.6	6.0
dell	1.0	1.7	—
dingle	1.0	1.7	—
vale	6.0	10.2	8.0
valley	7.0	11.9	7.0
(total)	23.0	39.1	21.0

Singular and Plural. — The statistical method may be usefully employed in a comparison of the relative frequency

of the singular and plural forms of "emotional" words. The plural is more capable of expressing emotional emphasis, as may be deduced from the frequent use made by poets of the plurals "waters," "skies," etc., as well as from the existence of common phrases such as "(a thousand) thanks," "(left to his tender) mercies," etc. (See on this point Deutschbein, *System der neuenglischen Syntax*, § 79.)

From the table below it will appear that the words denoting "darkness" or "shade" are better represented by their plurals in the First Period than in the Second; — the words denoting "brightness" exhibit an opposite tendency. Here, again, the relative values should be taken into account. Thus, e. g., the number of the plural "shadows" is more than twice as large as that of the singular "shadow" in the First Period; in the Second, it is only the fifth part, i. e., ten times less:

shade	16.0	27.2	17.0
shades	17.0	28.9	8.0
shadow	2.0	3.4	5.0
shadows	5.0	8.5	1.0
cave	3.0	5.1	5.0
caves	5.0	8.5	2.0
grove	12.0	20.4	7.0
groves	6.0	10.2	5.0
day	29.0	49.3	106.0
days	3.0	5.1	34.0
hill	20.0	34.0	36.0
hills	7.0	11.9	21.0

Note the exceptional position of "grove".

It is interesting to note that the essentially photophobic nature of *Comus* is illustrated by the circumstance that in the text both "shade" and "shadow" are found in the plural form only, the former eight times, the latter twice.

LXXXVI.

THE STUDY OF THE CHOICE OF WORDS IN THE PROSE WORKS

The effect of Milton's photophobia on his choice of words may be discovered in his prose works too. A chronological study of the latter will reveal the fact that up to the first attack of glaucoma in 1644/45 (he became totally blind in 1652), he frequently uses, with a distinct emotional emphasis, words, similes, and metaphors connected with the light-shade complex. This complex was "over-weighted" and constantly clamouring for expression.

The table given below shows the results of an investigation into the numerical strength of the photophobic element in the English Prose Works down to the year 1649:

Date of Publication	Title	Number of Photophobic Features per 1,000 lines in Fletcher's edition
1641	Of Reformation	23.9
1641	Of Prelatical Episcopacy	27.8
1641	Animadversions	24.1
1641/2	The Reason of Church Government	22.9
1642	An Apology for Smectymnuus	19.1
<u>1643</u>	The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce	20.0
1644	Areopagitica	27.6
1645	Tetrachordon	6.1
1645	Colasterion	5.6
1649	The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates	7.3
1649	Eikonoclastes	7.9

Note — The above figures are reproduced from the treatise entitled *Milton's Eyesight and the Chronology of his Works* (see ch. III, above).

There is, thus, a very marked falling off to be observed in the passage from 1644 to 1645, which is owing to the virtual disappearance of photophobia on account of the first attack of glaucoma. This observation has led the present writer to the conclusion, already practically applied to the dating of books IV and IX, and I and II (see ch. LXXVII above), that all those poetical works, too, which are distinguished by a strong element of the same kind, must have been written before the year 1645. A strong and curious difference of style distinguishes the literary productions of the two periods. A brief characterisation of this difference will be attempted below (see ch. XCV).

LXXXVII.

QUOTATIONS FROM "ANIMADVERSIONS"

In order to demonstrate what is meant by "Photophobic Features", the full material for the prose work mentioned in the chapter heading will be given below. The extracts are grouped under six different sections:

- (1) Albinotic Vision — Metaphors based upon the peculiarities of the Albinotic Eye.
- (2) Shade and Darkness — Illustrating the Love of an imperfect illumination.
- (3) Agreeable Modes of Illumination — References to Forms of Weak Light.
- (4) Contrast between Light and Shade — Metaphors etc. based upon this contrast.
- (5) Phenomena of Light — References to remarkable Forms of Illumination.
- (6) Albinotic Facies — This section contains references to peculiarities of the albino's Personal Appearance. Although these references have no direct connection with the symptoms of photophobia, they have been included because their frequency as well as their contents afford, in the present writer's opinion, especially convincing proof of Milton's albinism.

LXXXVIII.

NB. The references are to pages and columns of Fletcher's edition of the Prose Works.

(1) ALBINOTIC VISION

- (1) These free-spoken and plain-hearted men, that are the *eyes* of their country, and the *prospective-glasses* of their princes . . . (57b).
- (2) Take your *spectacles*, sir! (63b).
- (3) Remonst. . . surely could those *look with my eyes*, they would see cause to be ashamed . . .
 Answ. . . we shall have more respect to our Remonstrant, and liken him to the ass's master, though the story say he was *not so quick-sighted* as his beast. Is not this Balaam the son of Beor, the man *whose eyes are open* . . . *Boast not of your eyes*, it is feared you have Balaam's disease, *a pearl in your eye* . . . (63b).
- (4) You will find some such as will prognosticate your date, and tell you that, *after your long summer-solstice*, the equator calls for you . . . (64a).
- (5) *Opening our drowsy eyelids leisurely by that glimmering light*... (65b).
- (6) *Taking off by degrees the inveterate scales from our nigh perished sight* . . . (65b).
- (7) Thou hast made our false prophets to be found a lie *in the sight of all the people*, and chased them with sudden confusion and amazement *before the redoubled brightness of thy descending cloud*, that now covers thy tabernacle . . . (66a).
- (8) He gets him up *by break of day* . . . (69a).
- (9) The honest gardener, that *ever since the daypeep*, till now the sun was grown somewhat rank, had wrought painfully about his banks and seedplots . . . (69a).
- (10) Wading to his auditors *up to the eyebrows in deep shallows* . . . (70a)
- (11) They have *hid their eyes from the sabbaths of the Lord* . . . (72a).
- (12) *The fault is in your eyes* . . . *Wipe them and look better* . . . Yea, I beseech God to *open them rather that they may see good* . . . (73b).

LXXXIX.

(2) SHADE AND DARKNESS

- (1) *Within the close ambushment of worst errors* . . . (55).
- (2) Without further amusing himself *in the labyrinth* of controversial antiquity . . . (56).
- (3) Confining those against bishops to *darkness* . . . (57a).

- (4) To thrust themselves *under disguise* into a popular throng, to stand
the night long under eaves of houses and low windows . . . (57a).
- (5) That deceitful and close-couched evil of flattery . . . (57a).
- (6) In old cloaks and false beards . . . (57a).
- (7) A night-walking cudgeller . . . (57b).
- (8) *Eaves-dropping* . . . (57b).
- (9) What are they but black revenues of purgatory? (65a).
- (10) A man destitute of better *enlightening* . . . (65b).
- (11) The one is ever *cooped up* at his empty speculations . . . (70a).

XC.

(3) AGREEABLE MODES OF ILLUMINATION

- (1) That *glimmering light* . . . (65b).
- (2) Those golden *candlesticks* . . . (66a).
- (3) A *dimness* amongst us . . . (66a).
- (4) Their *starry light* . . . (66a).
- (5) Thou that hast the seven *stars* in thy right hand . . . (66a).
- (6) Thy holy and *ever burning lamps* . . . (66a).
- (7) How you have with Simon fished *all night* . . . (67a).
- (8) God threatens to remove the *candlestick* . . . (67b).

XCI.

(4) CONTRAST BETWEEN LIGHT AND SHADE

- (1) In the serious *uncasing* of a grand imposture . . . (55).
- (2) O what a death is it to the prelates to be thus *unvizarded*, thus
uncased, to . . . have your inside nakedness *thrown open* to public
view! (57a).
- (3) A full *insight of every lurking evil* . . . (57a).
- (4) *Qui color ater erat, nunc est contrarius atro* . . . (59a).
- (5) We will not buy your rabbinical *fumes*; we have one that calls
us to buy of him *pure gold tried in the fire* . . . (61a).
- (6) We . . . **have** yet our hearts . . . so obstructed . . . with the same
fleshly reasonings, which in our forefathers soon melted and gave
way, *against the morning-beam* of reformation . . . (66a).
- (7) O if we freeze at noon after their early thaw, let us fear lest
the *sun for ever hide himself*, and *turn his orient steps from our*
ingrateful horizon, justly condemned to be *eternally benighted* . . . (66 a).

- (8) The law of method . . . requires that clearest and plainest expressions be set foremost, to the end they may *enlighten any* following *obscurity* . . . (67a).
- (9) Do they think then that all these meaner and superfluous things come from *God*, and all the divine gift of learning from *the den of Plutus*, or *the cave of Mammon*? Certainly never any clear spirit nursed up *from brighter influences* . . . ever entered *there* but with scorn . . . (70a).
- (10) Two most unlike procreants, *the sun and mud* . . . (70a).
- (11) Arising to what climate soever he turn him, like that *sun* of righteousness that sent him, with healing in his wings, and *new light to break in upon the* chill and *gloomy hearts* of his hearers, rising *out of darksome barrenness a delicious and fragrant spring* of saving knowledge . . . (70b).
- (12) *Wipe* your fat corpulencies *out of our light* . . . (73b).

XCII.

(5) PHENOMENA OF LIGHT

- (1) Remonst. But raise and evince from the *light* of nature . . .
 Answ. Open your eyes to the *light* of grace, a better guide than nature. Look upon the mean condition of Christ and his apostles, without that accessory strength you take such pains to raise from the *light* of nature . . . (64b, 65a).
- (2) God the father of *light* . . . (65b).
- (3) Whenas we that have lived so long in *abundant light*, besides the *sunny reflection* of all the neighbouring churches, have yet our hearts rivetted with those old opinions . . . (66a).
- (4) Thy *beamy* walk through the midst of thy sanctuary . . . (66a).
- (5) Which as much as to take away from that church the *light* of his truth . . . (67b).
- (6) Their unquenchable charity, which . . . like a working *flame* had spun up to such a height of pure desire, as might be thought next to that love which dwells in God to save souls . . . (68b).
- (7) A plain unlearned man that lives well by that *light* which he has . . . (70a).
- (8) With a smooth and *glossy* varnish . . . (70b).

XCIII.

(6) ALBINOTIC FACIES

- (1) To cast a *lowering smile* . . . (55).
- (2) But his personal excellence like an antidote, overcame the malignity of that breeding corruption which was then a disease that lay hid for a while *under show of a full and healthy constitution*, as those hydropic humours not discernable at first from a *fair and juicy fleshiness of body* or that *unwonted ruddy colour*, which seems *graceful to a cheek otherwise pale*; and yet arises from evil causes, either of some inward obstruction or inflammation, and might deceive the first physicians till they had learnt the sequel which Cyprian's days did not bring forth; and the prelatism of episcopacy, which began then to burgeon and spread, has as yet, especially in famous men, a *fair, though a false, imitation of flourishing* . . . (58b).
- (3) *Open your eyes to the light of grace* . . . (64b).
- (4) Remonst. If yet you can *blush*.

Answ. . . A man would think you had eaten over-liberally of Esau's *red porridge*, and from thence dream continually of *blushing*; or perhaps, to heighten your fancy in writing, are wont to sit in your doctor's *scarlet*, which through your eyes infecting your pregnant imaginative with a *red suffusion*, begets a *continual thought of blushing*; that you thus persecute ingenuous men over all your book, with this one over-tired *rubrical conceit* still of *blushing* . . . spare yourself, lest you . . . make the very conceit itself *blush* with spurgalling . . . (71b).

NB. In quotation № 2, Milton seems to be describing his own case!

№ 4 refers to the peculiar colouring of the albino's complexion.

Milton's dislike of the sun is well illustrated by the following passage: "I shall not intend *this hot season* to bid you the base *through the wide and dusty champaign* of the councils". (60b)

The conception of underground passages seems to have strongly appealed to the poet's imagination. In *Arcades* he speaks of

Divine Alpheus, who, by secret sluice,

Stole *under seas* to meet his Arethuse; (ll. 30 f.)

and in the ninth book of *Paradise Lost*, he makes Satan enter the Happy Garden in similar fashion:

In with the river sunk, and with it rose

Satan involved in rising mist . . . (ll. 74 f.)

In *Animadversions*, the following passage is found exhibiting the same delight taken by the albino in the idea referred to above: "Or to make the word gift, like the river Mole in Surrey, to run under the bottom of a long line . . . a device ridiculous enough to make good that old wives' tale of a certain queen of England that *sunk* at Charing Cross, and rose up at Queenshithe". (67a)

Compare also what is related of Loocrine in the *History of Great Britain*: "Ofttimes retiring . . . through vaults and passages made underground . . . had by her a daughter equally fair . . ." (478b)

Note further that at one time he intended to sing about King Arthur "*sub terris bella moventem*" (Mansus, l. 81).

XCIV.

ALLUSIONS TO "ALBINOTIC VISION" COLLECTED FROM THE OTHER PROSE WORKS

The metaphors based on the albinotic peculiarities of Milton's eyesight seem more particularly suitable for illustrating the effect of his complaint upon his literary production. For this reason, a selection of such items from the rest of the English prose works belonging to the first period will be very instructive.

(A) From *Of Reformation*:

- (1) If our understanding have a *film* of ignorance over it, or be *blear* with gazing on false glitterings, what is that to the truth? If we will but *purge with sovereign eyesalve* that intellectual ray which God has planted in us . . . (9b)
- (2) Like a mirror of diamond, till it *dazzle and pierce their misty eyeballs* . . . (10b)
- (3) The *quick-sighted* Protestant eye cleared in great part from the mist of superstition . . . (15b)
- (4) A *dazzling giddiness* at noonday . . . (20a)
- (5) *Light and glory unapproachable* . . . (20a)
- (6) They fear the open plain of the Scriptures . . . they seek the dark, the bushy, the tangled forest, they would *imbosk*; they feel themselves strook in the transparent streams of divine truth; they would plunge, and tumble, and think to lie hid in the foul weeds and muddy water, where no plummet can reach the bottom . . . (10a)

(B) From *The Reason of Church Government*:

- (1) We shall see *with open eyes, not under a veil . . .* (31b)
- (2) The people of England will not suffer themselves to be juggled thus out of their faith and religion *by a mist of names cast before their eyes . . .* (38a)
- (3) Now that God has been so *long medicining her eyesight . . .* (48a)
- (4) And *dazzle the ignorant . . .* (53a)
- (5) The fair and *far-sighted eyes* of his natural discerning . . . (54a)

(C) From *An Apology for Smectymnuus*:

- (1) This man . . . sees truth as in a rapture . . . not as *throug the dim glass* of his affections . . . (86a)
- (2) *To see clearer than any fennel-rubbed serpent . . .* (86a)
- (3) Seeming bigger than they are *through the mist and vapour* which they raise . . . (93a)

(D) From *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*:

- (1) *The original blindness we are born in . . .* (120a)
- (2) Love, *though not wholly blind . . . yet having but one eye . . . and that eye not the quickest in this dark region here below . . .* (129a)
- (3) But removes the Pharisaic *mists raised between the law and the people's eyes . . .* (142a)
- (4) *To blind and puzzle them the more . . .* (142a)
- (5) *To dazzle them and not to bind us . . .* (144a)
- (6) Who is *not so thick-sighted . . .* (147a)

(E) From *Areopagitica*:

- (1) We boast our light; but *if we look not wisely on the sun itself, it smites us into darkness . . .* (115a)
- (2) *The light* which we have gained, *was given us, not to be ever staring on . . .* (115a)
- (3) *We have looked so long upon the blaze* that Zwinglius and Calvin have beacons up to us, *that we are stark blind . . .* (115a)
- (4) *Had we but eyes to lift up,* the fields are *white* already . . . (115b)
- (5) Kindling her *undazzled eyes* at the full midday beam . . . (116b)
- (6) Purging and *unscaling her long abused sight* at the fountain itself of *heavenly radiance . . .* (116b)
- (7) *Those that love the twilight . . .* (116b)
- (8) *Our eyes, bleared and dimmed with prejudice . . .* (118a)
- (9) To deal out . . . his beam, so as our *earthly eyes may best sustain it . . .* (118a)
- (10) *And taught the people to see day . . .* (118b)

XCV.

PHOTOPHOBIC ELEMENTS IN THE WORKS OF THE
SECOND PERIOD

Many of the metaphors etc. quoted in the preceding sections might very well have been coined by any poet, it is true; their value, apart from some quite exceptional and forcible specimens, lies in their frequency. It is not only the absolute figures that count, however. The fact that their number suddenly becomes less in the year 1644/45 can only be explained by assuming the existence of an abnormal sensitivity of the author's eyesight up to that date. After the first attack of glaucoma, the allusions to the light-shade complex do not only become less in number, but they also lose much of their former emotional appeal and artistic elaboration. A change of far-reaching consequences has taken place in the author's art, and it will be the object of future research to define the exact nature of the two Miltonic styles of writing: the style of the works composed in his first period is brilliant, trembling with emotion, and even extravagant in places; the style of the second is entirely different, exhibiting strong rationalizing tendencies, which may even degenerate into pedantry. The nature of the poetic impulse seems to have undergone a complete change.

XCVI.

THE EARLY LATIN PROSE WORKS — "UTRUM DIES
AN NOX PRAESTANTIOR SIT?"

The earliest among Milton's prose works that have been preserved are his Academic Prolusions, rhetorical exercises delivered in the university. As it is impossible to discover in what chronological order they were composed, they will be dealt with according to the arrangement observed in the first edition of these remarkable pieces.

The oration on the question "Whether Day or Night is to be preferred?" is a most extraordinary piece of writing. It was evidently intended as a reply to the criticism directed, in an unfriendly manner, against Milton's nocturnal habits. In order

to conciliate his enemies, he undertakes to praise day in opposition to night. But his nature proved stronger than his resolution: he was incapable of putting his plan into practice. He very cleverly gets out of the difficulty by confining himself to praising the early hours of the day only, i. e. dawn with its agreeable illumination. He declines to enter into a discussion as to the advantages of broad daylight: "To these (facts) some might, from an inexhaustible pen, add many more; but modest Day herself does not allow of details being referred to, and hastening with precipitous course to the west, she absolutely declines to be immoderately praised. And now day is already fading away, and will presently make room for night. . . ." (845b). He thus has recourse to the same subterfuge which served him in the description of his method of spending the day at Cambridge when a student — he simply slurs over the hateful hours (cp. ch. LXXV, above).

XCVII.

DETAILS FROM THE FIRST PROLUSION

The First Prolusion is, by the very nature of its subject, crammed with allusions to Milton's dominating complex. The following passages contain words and names which are mentioned because they suggest the ideas of Shade and Darkness:

- (1) In silvis atque montibus . . . (844a)
- (2) Densis obvoluti umbris . . . (845a)
- (3) Vites, arbores . . . (845b)
- (4) Tenebricosa terra . . . (845b)
- (5) Lemures, Larvae, Empusae . . . (845b)

Words and names suggestive of Caves and the Nether Regions are particularly frequent. Compare his predilection for the figure of Satan (ch. LXXVIII, above). The following allusions may be specially noted:

- (1) Typhoeus, Cerberus, Briareus . . . (843b)
- (2) Caeteros usque ad penitissimos inferorum recessus in fugam actos . . . (843b)
- (3) Charon, Styx (844b)
- (4) Lethe, Acheron, Erebus, Inferi (845b)

This Prolusion is especially rich in expressions and allusions which were suggested to Milton by his albinotic symptoms:

- (1) Volo enim ut initium orationis meae primulum imitetur diluculum;
ex quo subnubilo serenissima fere nascitur dies . . . (843b)
NB. Compare Sachs, § 142!
- (2) Ut sub imo Styge nocturnos abderet oculos . . . (844b)
- (3) Nobilissimus ille videndi sensus . . . (845b)
- (4) Lucifugus . . . (845b)
- (5) Tenebrio . . . (846a)
- (6) Ut aspicere audeat solem . . . et etiam cum communi luce
impune frui . . . (846a)
NB. In this passage, Milton expressed that which he himself
dared not do, but for which he was longing. Compare
Comus, ll. 734 ff.: . . . that they below
Would grow inured to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
- (7) Nigra noctis supercilia . . . (846a)
NB. This metaphor suggests the contracting of the brows as
practised by the albino, compare the quotation from *Comus*,
above, under (6).

XCVIII.

THE SECOND PROLUSION

The Second Proclusion contains an interesting allusion to the Lark and the Nightingale; they sing in the calm morning hours and all through the night respectively, i. e. they suggest periods of agreeable illumination. The former reminds of the Allegro mood; compare:

To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled Dawn doth rise . . .

(*L'Allegro*, ll. 41 ff.)

The latter is typical of the Penseroso state of mind; compare:

And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night . . .

(*Il Penseroso*, ll. 55 ff.)

The Latin original runs as follows: "Quid! quod credibile est ipsam alaudam prima luce recta in nubes evolare, et Lusciniam totam noctis solitudinem cantu transigere . . ." (847a)

XCIX.

THE THIRD PROLUSION

The Third Proclusion speaks of "Trophonii antrum", and of "monachorum specus" (847b); it refers to "praeruptae montium angustiae", and ends with a long passage abounding in allusions to all kinds of remarkable phenomena of illumination, and strongly reminding of the early Latin poem *In Obitu Praesulis Eliensis* (ll. 45 ff.), and of the *Fifth Elegy* (ll. 15—20). Having spoken of "Ætna flammigerans", the poet goes on to say: "Nec dubitetis, auditores, etiam in coelos evolare, ibique illa multiformia nubium spectra, nivisque coacervatam vim, et unde illae matutinae lachrymae contemplerini, grandinisque exinde loculos intropiscite, et armamenta fulminum perscrutemini; vos clam sit quid sibi velit aut Jupiter aut Natura, cum dirus atque ingens cometa coelo saepe minitatur incendium, nec vos vel minutissimae lateant stellulae, quotquot inter polos utrosque sparsae sunt, et dispalatae; immo solem peregrinantem sequamini comites..." (848b).

C.

THE FOURTH PROLUSION

The Fourth Proclusion speaks of "Styx" which again suggests the Nether World, and of "Larvae" and "Empusae" (849a, 850a). The following extract contains a very typical example of a metaphor directly based upon the author's heliophobia: "Nam certe si illa adhuc in terris diversaretur, quis inducator ut credat, luscum caecutientem errorem veritatem solis aemulam posse intueri, quin plane vincatur oculorum acies, quin et ipse rursus abigatur ad inferos, unde primum emersus est?" (849a).

CI.

THE FIFTH PROLUSION

The Fifth Proclusion is remarkable for a simile based upon the experience of the effect produced upon the albino by the

sun suddenly breaking through the clouds: "In hoc soli non absimilis, qui saepe involutum se, et quasi inquinatum nubibus ostendit humanis oculis, cum tamen collectis in se radiis, totoque ad se revocato splendore purissimus ab omni labe colluceat" (852a). Compare ch. XCVII, above.

CII.

THE SIXTH PROLUSION

In the Sixth Prolusion, the names "Æacus, Minos" call up the idea of the infernal regions, whereas "Trophonius, Avernus" were inserted because of their association with caves and grotts. A highly characteristic passage is the following: "Sed nolite, academici, sic me jacentem et consternatum, et acie oculorum vestrorum tanquam de coelo tactum, nolite quaeso sic deserrere . . ." (852b).

CIII.

THE SEVENTH PROLUSION

In the Seventh Prolusion, there may be found a curious passage very aptly illustrating Milton's love of shady places: "Testor ipse lucos, et flumina, et dilectas villarum ulmos, sub quibus aestate proxime praeterita (si dearum arcana eloqui liceat) summam cum musis gratiam habuisse me jucunda memoria recolo; ubi et ego inter rura et semotos saltus velut occulto aevo crescere mihi potuisse visus sum" (856b).

CIV.

THE INVENTION OF NEW WORDS AND PHRASES

Having dealt with the influence of Milton's albinism upon the Selection and Elaboration of Plot, and upon the Choice of Words, it remains to apply the third method for discovering an author's "over-weighted" complexes, viz. the investigation of the Formation of New Words and Phrases (see ch. XXXIV, above). Milton did not introduce many new linguistic features, as he was somewhat pedantic in his use of the English language.

Nevertheless, under the influence of his photophobia, he felt compelled to create a certain number of innovations, some of which are of a most exceptional kind. The whole problem will have to be dealt with more thoroughly by future research now that the question has been formulated.

CV.

"GLOOM"

Acting under the compelling pressure from his strongest complex, Milton "invented" this noun to describe that form of illumination which he liked best, viz. according to the definition given by the *New English Dictionary*, "an indefinite degree of darkness or obscurity, the result of night, clouds, deep shadow, etc.". The same authority states that "in the sense of 'darkness' the word may possibly be a new formation by Milton; it occurs nine times in his poems . . .". The material collected for the *N. E. D.* contains no further example of this noun earlier than the 18th century, which seems to prove that Milton was its originator.

New words are created out of some intense emotion: the ordinary expressions of the language of common life seem insufficient to convey the full meaning of the author. It is a highly significant fact that Sachs felt similarly in this matter. Apart from a few words of a technical nature, chiefly colour-names, he gives but one word in his native idiom, namely the word *Helldunkel*, which serves to explain the Latin "sublustre". This is the same as Milton's *gloom*. Sachs was no poet, so he did not venture to create a new word; but he must at least use his mother tongue in naming that which was capable of stirring his soul to its very depth. He says: "Not only under a serene sky, but also under a cloudy one the brother (i. e. Sachs himself) with delight watches the approach of evening which satisfies that peculiar love of Semi-darkness (*Helldunkel*) more than the (cloudy) day itself" (§ 144). And in a previous chapter: "If one abstracts from a sky of beautiful blue . . . flooded by an uncovered sun as far as eye can see, these albinos love all Carinthia (their native province) to be steeped in Semi-darkness (*Helldunkel*) rather than in clear light" (§ 140; cp. ch. LI, above).

Milton did not invent a totally new root, for both the verb *to gloom* with the adjective *glooming*, and the adjective *gloomy*, from which he formed the new noun, already existed in the language. He was most probably inspired in this as in other matters by Spenser, about whom Dryden is reported to have said: "Milton was the poetical son of Spenser. Milton has acknowledged to me that Spenser was his original". The adjectives *glooming* and *gloomy* are frequently used by the author of the *Faerie Queene* in most effective combinations. A few quotations will support the contention that in this matter, too, Spenser was Milton's original:

But forth unto the darksome hole he went,
And lookèd in: his glistring armour made
A little glooming light, much like a shade.
(*Faerie Queene*, I. i. 14.3 ff.)

A gloomy grove of myrtle trees did rise.
(ib., III. vi. 43.3)

By that the *gloomy evening* on them fell.
(ib., IV. iv. 25.6)

Did underneath them make a *gloomy shade*.
(ib., VI. iv. 13.7)

Milton used the word to describe a peculiar kind of light, viz. that form of twilight or semi-darkness which he loved. When the word was revived in the 18th century, it was often used in a figurative sense, as it became associated with that particular mood which accompanies a "gloomy" illumination, the mood of the *Penseroso*. This new meaning, namely "a state of melancholy or depression", is well illustrated by the following extracts from Thomson's *Seasons*:

Neglected fortune flies; and sliding swift,
Prone into ruin, fall his scorned affairs.
'Tis nought but *gloom* around; the darkened sun
Loses his light . . . (Spring, II. 1004 ff.)

Farewell! Ye gleanings of departed peace,
Shine out your last! the yellow-tinging plague
Internal vision taints, and in a night
Of livid *gloom* imagination wraps. (ib., II. 1079 ff.)

The new word had been charged, as it were, with the most intense emotion by its original inventor, and later poets eagerly seized upon it to use it for their own purposes.

Note. Milton used the new noun in the following places: *Nativity Ode*, l. 77; *Il Penseroso*, l. 80; *Comus*, l. 132; *Paradise Lost*, I. 244, 544; II. 400, 858; VII. 246; X. 848.

CVI.

"TO IMBOSK"

This word is derived from the Italian language, and was in use long before Milton began to write. He introduced, however, an important innovation by converting what had been a strictly reflexive verb (to imbosk oneself) into an intransitive one. The meaning of this word is one which must have appealed strongly to a sufferer from photophobia. Of the Italian original, Florio (see ch. VII, above) gives the following definition: "To enter or go into a wood, to take covert or shelter as a deer doeth... Also to lie in ambush" (quoted from the *New English Dictionary*). This is exactly what the most typical representative of Milton, *Il Penseroso*, proposes to do when the light of the sun becomes too glaring for him (see ch. LX, above). Again and again, Milton manifests, in his first period, his extraordinary love of shade. Considering this fact, it is quite natural that he should have felt compelled by an irresistible impulse to deviate from the linguistic tradition, and to use the verb *to imbosk oneself* in an intransitive and, therefore, absolute, manner. By this bold change, the new verb gains immensely in power of expression, as will be seen from the following quotation, part of which has already been adduced in another context (see ch. XCIV, A, 6), and which contains the only example of this novel usage: "But I trust they for whom God has reserved the honour of reforming this church, will easily perceive their adversaries' drift in thus calling for antiquity: they fear the plain field of the Scriptures: the chase is too hot; they seek the dark, the bushy, the tangled forest, *they would imbosk* . . . (*Of Reformation*, p. 10a).

CVII.

"TO IMBROWN"

The verb *to imbrown* is no absolutely new creation either. Milton discovered it in the Italian language, and he used it in a highly suggestive context in his *Fourth Sonnet*:

Qual in colle aspro, all' *imbrunir* di sera,
 L'avvezza giovinetta pastorella
 Va bagnando l'erbetta strana e bella . . . (ll. 1 ff.);
 As on a hill-top rude, when closing day
Imbrowns the scene, some pastoral maiden fair
 Waters a lovely foreign plant with care . . . (Cowper).

This word naturally strongly recommended itself to the poet's imagination; it served to describe, in artistic form, a kind of illumination of which he was especially fond. He introduced it into his native language, making use of it in the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*, which was written, according to the present writer's theory, shortly after his Italian journey (see ch. LXXVII, above):

Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierced shade
Imbrowned the noontide bowers . . . (ll. 244 ff.)

The English meaning of the word *to embrown*, as it was spelt by later writers, is "to darken, make dusky". This very expressive word, like the noun *gloom*, was taken over by Edward Young and used in a metaphorical sense in his *Night Thoughts*:

And thy dark pencil, Midnight! darker still
 In melancholy dipt, *embrowns* the whole . . . (V. 79 f.).

CVIII.

"THE PALPABLE OBSCURE"

It was again under the pressure from his "over-weighted" complex that Milton introduced the daring use of the adjective *obscure* as a substantive, meaning "obscurity, darkness". The

common words denoting the same idea appeared too trite and colourless to comprise all that intensity of emotion with which Milton felt compelled to utter this notion. The new noun is found in the following context:

. . . who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark, unbottomed, infinite Abyss,
And through the *palpable obscure* find out
His uncouth way . . . (*Paradise Lost*, II. ll. 404 ff.)

This word, too, was used by a few later writers, evidently in direct imitation of Milton. Pope introduced it into his translation of the *Odyssee*:

Cautious in the *obscure* he hoped to fly
The curious search of Euryclea's eye. (XIX. ll. 458 f.)

CIX.

VARIANT READINGS OF "COMUS"

Besides the printed text of *Comus* there exists a MS. draft with numerous variant readings. As the MS. may be regarded as representing a more original state of the received text, it is of interest to investigate the nature of the changes made by the poet. Such investigation will result in the conclusion that a surprisingly large number of alterations are in connection with the light-shade complex. It was this complex that was constantly agitating the poet's mind at the time when *Comus* was written. The more remarkable instances will be enumerated below:

- | | |
|------------|--|
| (1) MS.: | And in thick <i>covert</i> of black <i>shade</i> imbowered . . . |
| Rec. Text: | And in thick <i>shelter</i> of black <i>shades</i> imbowered . . . |
| | (l. 62) |
| (2) MS.: | In the steep <i>Tartarian</i> stream . . . |
| Rec. Text: | In the steep <i>Atlantic</i> stream . . . (l. 97) |
| (3) MS.: | . . . the <i>northern</i> pole . . . |
| Rec. Text: | . . . the <i>dusky</i> pole . . . (l. 99) |
| (4) MS.: | Stay thy <i>polished</i> ebon chair . . . |
| Rec. Text: | Stay thy <i>cloudy</i> ebon chair . . . (l. 134) |
| (5) MS.: | My <i>powdered</i> spells . . . |
| Rec. Text: | My <i>dazzling</i> spells . . . (l. 154) |

- (6) MS.: In the blind *alleys* of this *arched* wood . . .
 Rec. Text: In the blind *mazes* of this *tangled* wood . . . (l. 181)
- (7) MS.: And airy tongues that lure *night-wanderers* . . .
 Rec. Text: And airy tongues that syllable men's names . . .
 (l. 208)
- (8) MS. inserts: . . . while I see ye, This *dusky hollow* is a paradise . . . (l. 216)
- (9) MS. inserts: . . . as did forsaken Proserpine,
 When the big wallowing flakes of *pitchy clouds*
 And *darkness* wound her in . . . (after l. 356)
- (10) MS.: But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
 Walks in *black vapours*, though the *noontide brand*
Blaze in the summer-solstice . . .
 Rec. Text: But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the *midday sun*;
Himself is his own dungeon . . . (ll. 383 ff.).
- (11) MS. inserts: I could be willing, though now *i'the dark*, to try
 A rough encounter (passado) with the shaggiest ruffian,
 That *lurks by hedge* or lane of this dead circuit . . .
 (after l. 409)
- (12) MS.: The sea o'erfraught would heave her waters up
 Above the stars, and th'unsought diamonds
 Would so bestud the *centre* with their light,
 And so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
 Were they not taken thence, that they below
 Would grow inured to day . . .
 Rec. Text: The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought
 diamonds
 Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
 And so bestud with stars, that they below
 Would grow inured to light, and come at last
 To look upon the sun with shameless brow . . .
 (ll. 732 ff.)

Note. By „centre“, Milton means “the centre of the earth“, a region of complete darkness. Compare:

He that has light within his own clear breast
 May sit i'the *centre*, and enjoy bright day . . .
 (*Comus*, ll. 381 f.).

CX.

CONCLUSION

On the preceding pages, an attempt has been made to prove that Milton was an albino, and that this knowledge entails a new conception of his art. But the prevailing conception of his personality will also have to undergo modification. There need not be any lessening of his fame, as might be feared, however. Milton will appear more human than before; his tragical fate will deeply move, and he will be more admired for the manner in which he mastered life: fighting against terrible odds, pouring out his soul in poetry quivering with passion and intense emotion. It was through unspeakable suffering that John Milton became a literary artist of undying fame!

APPENDIX

CONTAINING

THE ORIGINAL LATIN OF THE MORE IMPORTANT EXTRACTS
QUOTED IN THE PRECEDING TREATISE

FROM

GEORG. TOB. LUDOVICUS SACHS

HISTORIA NATURALIS DUORUM LEUCAETHIOPUM
AUCTORIS IPSIUS ET SORORIS EIUS

SOLISBACI
(SULZBACH)

1812

DE CUTE

§ 28.

Multum vero abest, ut ideo Phoebi telis omnino sint inviolabiles. Quod aliis haud raro contingit, idem et iuvenis, de quo disserimus, semel, puella aliquoties experta est. Inflammationem puta et vesicas vi solis in cute oriundas. Non ita pridem, cum ille die vernali, non quidem aestuoso et flagrante, attamen satis calido et illustrissimo, horisque primis post meridiem, in regione non admodum edita (inter Tubingam et Reutlingam) iter pedestre unius fere et dimidiaē parasangae summa, qua fieri potuit, celeritate multumque sudans, fecisset, sequenti die cutis antibrachiorum (quae, ut expeditior esset, nudaverat) ea parte, quae soli exposita fuerat, inflammatione erysipelatosā vehementiori correpta est. Quae die tertio, epidermide in vesicas partim satis magnas, figura irregulares, confluentes et flavo sero impletas sublata, erysipelatis bullosi speciem induxit. Caeterum corpus optime valebat. Tribus fere septimanis cutis in statum pristinum solita via reversa est. Sed ruber cutis sanatae color mox vertebatur in badium, qui plures demum post menses sensim disparuit . . .

DE OCULIS

§ 51

Supercilia albi, quod iam scimus, coloris, tenuia, mollia, sed densa, prominuta et depressa, musculisque satis validis et exercitatis instructa, quorum ope, adsumto musculorum orbicularium externo strato, fortiori cuique luminis aggressui, corrugati et sueto magis depressi sese obii-ciunt . . .

§ 52

Palpebrae ob sensilitatem oculorum ad lucem plerunque conniventes, haud raro vix non clausae sunt. Longae insigniter, quales in aliis leucaethiopibus esse dicuntur, non sunt, sed superiores, ob depressa supercilia, angustiores.

§ 61

. . . Summo denique luminis in gradu, praesertim si illud a splendidis vel candidis obiectis largius in oculos mittitur, prae palpebris vix non clausis ciliisque contiguis pupillae magnitudo observari nequit.

FULGOR OCULORUM

§ 112

Maximus et frequentissimus fulgor oculorum erat, cum hi leucaethiopes neonati et infantes essent. Ex eo tempore haud parum decrevit et rarior factus est.

In fratre neonato, quem in primis vitae septimanis continuo in hypocausto subobscuro fuisse iam diximus, continuus erat, et tam clarus et vividus, ut ipsam sub lactendo matrem semel atque iterum ita perturbaret, ut filius ei vix non e brachiis excideret. Sine dubio hic splendor ad singularem illum colorem, quem tunc temporis oculi habebant, permultum contribuit. Quatenus ille color huc referendus sit, e matris relatione non satis intelligi potest.

Minus aliquanto, quam hic, soror neonata oculis lucebat. At nunc in ea fulgor oculorum satis adhuc frequens et lucidus est, qui in fratre nunc raro et multo tenuior observatur. Sed undecim fere annis aetate eos differre meminisse iuvabit. . .

DE OCULORUM RATIONE AD LUCEM ET TENEBRAS
UNIVERSE SPECTATAS

§ 131

Oculos, de quibus tractamus, insolite pro lumine esse sensiles, monitu vix iam opus est. . .

Communis enim est haec oculorum sensilitas nostris cum omnibus, quorum diligentiores nobis observationes innotuere, leucaethiopibus. Maior quidem in nostris, quam in aliis compluribus, non tamen tanta est, quantam in permultis leucaethiopibus observaverunt, in iis praesertim, qui interiora Africae et isthmum Americae incolunt, et fere nyctalopes noctu solum ex obscuris suis habitaculis antrisque prodire dicuntur.

§ 135

Insolita tamen luminis sensatio non semper, ut vulgaris est opinio, molesta est. Proficiscuntur quidem ab ea varia incommoda, quotiescunque clarior lux oculos ferit. At eandem ob sensilitatem multis, quas

visui debemus, voluptatibus nostri certe leucaethiopes magis, quam ceteri plerique mortales, patere videntur. Intelligent lectores, si narrationem nostram audire perrexerint, illos lumini — modo ne nimio — vere amicos esse. Verumtamen haec photophilia non eo excurrit, ut illi omnimodo et absque restrictione lumen magis, quam obscuritatem ament.

§ 136

Clariorem quidem lucem, praesertim si variis e partibus in oculos cadit, omnino hi leucaethiopes aversantur fugiuntque. Quae non quidem verum dolorem, attamen ingratum quendam ac verbis expressu difficilem sensum in oculis, nec non, si diutius oculos infestat, in parte anteriore cerebri excitat. Tunc non possunt, quin omnia, quibus oculi muniti sunt, umbracula moveant lucique obiciant. Quandoque vel clausis plane palpebris a molesto luminis aggressu non satis defenduntur . . .

§ 137

Fratri plurium candelarum et ignium culinarium lumen valde molestum esse refert periegetes saepius citatus. . . qui eum in Carinthia vidit. Satis raro nec nisi diutius oculis in talibus luminibus defixis vel plures per horas in maiorem densioremque eorum coacervationem conversis hoc sibi accidisse ipse ille leucaethiops monet. E contrario insigniter inde a pueritia sese pariter ac sororem delectatos esse omnium generum spectaculis igneis, praesertim nocturnis, e. gr. luminibus festis, artificiis pyrotechnorum, incendiis, meteoris fulgentibus, fabrorum, metallurgorum et vitriariarum ignibus, nec non lunae splendore et sole oriente ac occidente. Fratrem, cum adhuc tenellus esset, magna iam attentione atque conspicua cum oblectatione lunam plenam contuitum esse, ex eius parentibus cognovimus . . .

§ 138

. . . Media luce, altiorique simul sole minus adhuc lubenter quam alii homines domo pedem — nisi in loca umbrosa — efferre videntur. Multo molestius illis est eo tempore versari in viis arenosis, lapidibus stratis vel nive tectis. (Minus enim oculi a lumine infero, quam a supero su is umbraculis defenduntur.) Quibus tandem si nubes accedunt candidae, vel totum coelum, vel maiorem eius partem ipsumque solem ita obducentes, ut huius radii per illas, quasi per tenue velum, subrepant — illorum oculi lumine undequaque in eos reflexo intolerabilem fere in modum infestantur.

Ad hos aliosque molestissimos lucis aggressus arcendos iridis vel maxima non sufficit expansio. Palpebrae, dextri praesertim oculi, tant-

opere connivent, ut haud raro clausae videantur. Re vera frater intensissimo lumine dextrum claudit oculum. Levatur praeterea genarum cutis, depressuntur corruganturve supercilia — sane non in decoris vultus augmentum. Deprimitur insuper pileus, ac manus aliaque umbracula in subsidium vocantur.

§ 139

A quibus (§ 138) si discesseris, vel serenissimi diei claritas leuc-aethiopibus nostris non modo non molesta, sed vere iucunda est — dum eam palpebris quantum satis conniventibus moderari licet. Sunt enim talibus diebus lux clarior, umbra obscurior, maior colorum vigor et discrepantia, quae omnia mirum quantum — immo fortasse plus in his, quam in aliis plerisque hominibus ad distincte et iucunde videndum conferunt. Imprimis mane ac sub vesperam lubenter sub divo versantur, praecipue ubi lumini aliquae umbrae intersitae sunt. Neque aliter res se habet hyeme, quamvis tunc nive humus obducatur. Immo haec, si a sole ascendente vel ad occasum vergente illustratur, amoenissimum illis, ut aliis multis, praebet spectaculum.

Pleraque etiam animi et corporis opera facilius fieri ac melius succedere solent sereno, quam nubilo coelo — prae ceteris vero studia et ea opera muliebria, quae diligentiorum oculorum usum desiderant. Quibus enim in considerandis minutioribus obiectis nulla lux commodior ea, quae e coelo sereno in locum umbrosum, e. gr. in cubiculum, demittitur . . .

Attamen idem et serenis diebus abdita nemorum, montium fauces rupiumque speluncas atque alia loca sublustria quaerere nonnunquam inde a puero solebat, quin tamen semper molestiorem aliquam lucem effugiendi — vel amatoriis, poëticis aliisque somniis indulgendi studio id faceret.

§ 140

Cum vero amoenum coeli caeruleum, cum lucis et umbrae sinceræ distincta vicissitudo, et laeta vicensque colorum varietas, a sincero sole per orbem visibilium effusae, discedunt, omnino illi Carinthe in sublustri (Helldunkel) esse, quam in clara luce, malunt . . .

Exceptis diebus plane serenis, plane nubilae fratri prae ceteris placeant. Nam his quoque sua est amoenitas ab illarum amoenitate prorsus diversa, nec satis bene verbis describenda. Minus quidem coelo nubilo delectantur oculi coloribus, qui languidiores et hebetes, atque umbris, quae exiles et incertae sunt: at iidem multo rarius offenduntur lumine nimio atque coloribus flagrantibus, liberiusque per maiorem palpebrarum rimam prospiciunt . . . Animus tranquillius et quietus potius, quam hilaris et alacer, et magis, quam serenis diebus, data occasione in tristitiam pronus esse solet . . .

In amplis et obscuris aedificiis (e. gr. templis), in saltibus tenebris, rupium faucibus ac speluncis versari nullo tempore magis, quam coelo nubibus undique involuto, gaudet.

Idem diebus nubilis haud raro omnibus cubiculi sui fenestris vela obtendit, immo (praesertim hyeme, ubi frigoris arcendi studium accedit) valvas opponit, ita ut solum tantum luminis intret, quanto illi ad scribendum legendumve opus est; et magnopere gratam hanc obscuritatem laudat.

§ 141

Dies subnubilae, quibus sol nec integrum suum et sincerum splendorem habet, nec prorsus nubibus absconditur, non solum iucunda serenarum excitatione (§ 139) pariter ac plane nubilarum grata quiete (§ 140) carent, sed etiam ob albidum coeli colorem (§ 138) ac singularem satique cuivis lectorum notam rerum terrestrium collustrationem nonnihil fratri plerumque sunt ingratae . . . Subnubilis quoque diebus obturat nonnunquam velatque fenestras . . .

§ 142

Quum primum sol clarus atque sincerus e nubibus prodit, commutari omnia celeriter solent. Aperiantur, ni quid obstat, una cum coelo fenestrae. Tunc laeto quodam vigore tam subito nonnunquam tamque mirum in modum corpus pariter atque animus perfunditur, ut vix luminis per solos oculos efficientia id fieri credas.

§ 143

Sole occaso coeloque sereno uterque leucaethiops quam maxime delectatur lumine illo leni, grato variisque nonnunquam coloribus insigni, quod coelum occidentale fundit, nec non amoena obiectorum terrestrium per illud collustratione. Tunc omnia prorsus sese recipiunt oculi umbracula, sorbetque lucem coelestem late patens cum voluptate pupilla. Tunc sub divum — nisi iam prius id fecerint (§ 139) — prodire vel saltem in cubiculo e quo liberior versus occidentem est prospectus, esse gaudent.

Idem de diluculo dixeris, si ab eo discesseris, quod hoc in nonnullis aliter, quam a crepusculo homines afficiantur. Blande mulcentur oculi post diurnam fatigationem mitiori sensimque decrescente crepusculi luce: laeti cupidique prospiciunt somno refecti redeuntem cum aurora crescentemque diem. Eadem universi corporis, eadem vel ipsius animi est ratio . . .

§ 144

. . . Neque sereno solum, sed etiam nubilo coelo frater cum oblectatione ingruentem videt vesperam, quae magis adhuc, quam ipsa dies singulari illi obscuritatis sublustris (Helldunkel) amori satisfacit . . .

§ 145

Luna — modo pura et sincera sit — uterque leucaethiops mirifice laetatur, ac in eius splendore, imprimis si plena est, lubentissime sub divo versatur. Lunae quoque, pariter ac solis, lumen umbris passim distinguere amant. (Cf. § 139). Haec lux fratris animum serenum, immo saepe hilarem laetumque reddere solet. . .

§ 146

Lumen artificiale minus quidem, quam naturale, amant, attamen id, modo ne nimis forte sit, neutiquam aversantur. Immo varia his aequae ac aliis hominibus e luminibus artificialibus redundant oblectamenta (§ 137). Noctu loci, ubi versantur, commodam et elegantem per ignes, candelas etc. collustrationem maxime probant. Haud raro in theatris oecisque multarum candelarum multis speculis reflexo splendore impletis sine ullo oculorum incommodo plures per horas commorati sunt . . .

§ 148

Hac occasione data monemus (quod quidem non soli luminis tenebrarumque rationi adscripserimus): fratris animum noctu — non solum in nocturna obscuritate, sed etiam ubi haec lumini artificiali cessit — non solum in nocturno silentio, et nocturna solitudine, sed etiam in frequentissimorum coetuum et magnificentissimarum festivitatum splendore ac tumultu — mobiliorem atque in affectus proniorem quam interdum esse solere.

DE OCULORUM RATIONE AD COLORES

§ 149

Maxima, ditissima et amoenissima est, quam nunc — pro dolor! — praetereundo solum et pro momentis intramus, provincia . . .

§ 151

Idem magnopere coloribus moventur . . .

CLARITAS VISUS PRO GRADU LUMINIS

§ 214

In his hominibus multo magis, quam in aliis, claritas visus dependet a luminis ab obiecto, de quo agitur, in oculos missi proportionem ad id, quod a reliquis obiectis una cum illo conspectis, praecipue ab obiectis illi vicinis, in oculos mittitur . . .

Rarissime fratri stellam nudis oculis sole splendente videre contigit. Stellae illi serius, quam aliis plerisque, e crepusculo emergunt citiusque diluculo vel lunae cedunt. Idem vero nocte satis obscura coeloque sereno stellas sextae, immo nonnunquam septimae magnitudinis distincte videt: cum haud raro alii homines illi adstantes, bene ceterum oculorum suorum acie contenti, quartae magnitudinis stellas vix cernant . . .

§ 216

. . . Hi leucaethiopes multo clarius in aedibus, quam sub dio vident. Sub divo legere, scribere, obiecta minutiora diligentius oculis examinare vel subtilius quoddam opus facere plerumque illis est difficillimum. In ipso vero solis splendore (nisi paullo ante occasum aut post ortum) vel sub coelo nubibus albis subpellucidis obducto — imprimis cum simul multa lux e solo aedificiis lucidiori colore infectis etc. resplendet — illa agere aut plane non, aut non ultra pauca momenta valent. Coelo sereno mane et sub vesperam facilius quidem illa fiunt, attamen non ita facile, ut in aedibus . . .

§ 218

Dierum serenarum horae solis ortum subsequentes eiusdemque occasum praecedentes ad clare et distincte videndum prae ceteris idoneae sunt, tum per iustum luminis temperamentum, tum per umbras plures et maiores indeque orientem collustrationis varietatem. Aequali cum his, vel certe primo post eas loco ponendum est temporis spatium solis ortui antecedens, occasum subsequens, cuius magnitudo secundum diluculi et crepusculi claritatem et durationem (si fratrem respicis) inter unius et trium horae quadrantum limites variat.

Minus commodae visui claro sunt horae meridianae.

Quas magno intervallo sequitur nox luna magis minusve illustris.

Parum minus, quam hac, cernitur in diluculi parte priori crepusculique posteriore.

Ipsa denique nox et luna et lampade expers ordinem claudit.

Idem fere diei temporum quoad vim visum clarum promovendi coelo subnubilo est ordo.

Diebus plane nubilis mane ac vespera ob luminis tenuitatem multo minus; quam media eaque maior pars diei, visui favent. A quibus ad caetera patet ratiocinium.

§ 219

. . . Ad unius candelae sebaceae crassioris lumen, si huius, oculi et librorum chartarumque positum atque distantiam ad libitum componere et, quo minus luminis radii oculos ipsos feriant, positura corporis aut manu cavere licet, plures per horas continuo libros typis non multum iis, quas, Lector benevole, nunc ante oculos habes, minoribus in chartam tolerabilem impressos legere, atque literas non ita subtiles vel elegantes in charta alba ducere sine ulla molestia vel incommodo valent . . .

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